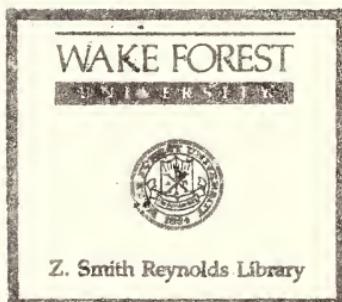


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History of
French Broad
Baptist
Association
1807-1994





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**History of
French Broad
Baptist Association
1807-1994
and
Histories of the Fifty-Eight
Churches**

by
***History Committee of the
French Broad
Baptist Association***

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French Broad Baptist Association

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Acknowledgements

The History Committee of the French Broad Association is happy to present this history of the Association and of its fifty-eight churches. The story of the Association was for the most part drawn from the minutes of meetings held since 1807. Additional general information came from a number of Baptist histories, a few special studies, and interviews with current members. The Committee expresses its sincere appreciation for the work of church clerks and others who compiled the histories of the fifty-eight local churches.

A word of special appreciation goes to Troy Rogers and his staff for their continued support and encouragement during the several months spent in preparing the text.



FRENCH BROAD BAPTIST CENTER



The Beginning

Twenty years before the American Revolutionary war settlers from the Tide Water Region of North Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania had found their way into the mountains of North Carolina and on into the Great Appalachian Valley beyond. Some of these early comers were Baptists who were fleeing persecution in the eastern settlements. These early Baptists were joined by a larger movement from the Yadkin River Valley during the 1770's. William Tryon, the Royal Governor of North Carolina, hated Baptists because their clergymen continued to perform marriage ceremonies in defiance of the Marriage Act (that declared only marriages performed by Anglican clergymen were legal) and taught their congregations that all churches should be supported by voluntary contributions, not taxes. In 1771 he marched his army through the Baptist communities along the Yadkin River,

burning and laying plantations to waste, taking food and other supplies and arresting men and taking them in chains to Hillsborough for trial as outlaws and traitors. His raids led to a massive exodus of Baptists from the area. Only forty-eight members were left in the once thriving church at Sandy Creek; other churches experienced similar loses. Some of these migrants moved into South Carolina and on into Georgia; others went into Virginia. Still others moved west, crossed the mountains, and settled along the upper Holston.

Fugitives from the Yadkin founded the first Baptist church in eastern Tennessee and began a movement which was to penetrate the mountains of Western North Carolina. On November 6, 1780, Baptists who settled in the Carolina mountains organized the French Broad Baptist Church in what is now Henderson County, the first church of any faith to be organized west of the Blue Ridge in North Carolina. By the next year Baptists in Tennessee and Carolina had established five or six churches and organized a temporary association through which they retained membership in the Sandy Creek Association. In 1786, however, the new churches gave up the distant parent and formed the Holston Association. During the next two decades other churches were organized in the area. By 1800 thirty-six congregations with from two to three thousand members had been established. For geographic reasons some of the Carolina churches became members of the Broad River Association in South Carolina.

Distances and difficulties of travel to meetings, however, limited the participation of the Carolina

churches in the larger organizations in South Carolina and Tennessee. In 1807 messengers from three churches in the Holston and three in the Broad River met and organized the French Broad Association. The churches forming the new group were: Little Ivy, New Found, and Locust Old Field from the Holston Association; French Broad, Cane Creek, and Caney River from the Broad River Association.

The organizers of the new association drew up a Covenant and Rules of Decorum. The Covenant, or Constitution, reads as follows:

**CONSTITUTION, &c.
of the
French Broad Baptist Association,
AS ADOPTED BY THAT BODY IN THE YEAR
1807.**

ASSOCIATION COVENANT

Article 1. We believe in the only living and true God, and that there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one in substance, and equal in power and glory.

2. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and the only rule of Faith and practice.

3. We believe in the doctrine of Original Sin.

4. We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from the fallen state he is in, by his own free will and ability.

5. We believe that sinners are justified in the

sight of God, only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

6. We believe the saints shall persevere in grace, and that they never shall fall finally away.

7. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances instituted by Christ and that true believers are the only proper subjects thereof.

8. We believe that the true mode of Baptism is by immersion.

9. We believe that no person has a right to administer the ordinances but such as are regularly called and qualified thereunto.

10. We believe that no man should be ordained to the Ministry without the unanimous voice of the Church to which he belongs.

11. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general Judgment; that the punishment of the wicked shall be everlasting; and the joys of the righteous eternal.

12. We, the members of the French Broad Baptist Association, agreeing to the above articles of Faith, do for and in behalf of the churches whom we represent, covenant, agree, and give ourselves up to each other, in church and christian fellowship, in order to keep up the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and to assist each other in all matters of distress, and to pray for each other's prosperity.

RULES OF DECORUM

1. The messengers thus chosen and sent, are to be recommended to the Association by letters from

the churches by whom they are sent, and which shall be expressive of their fellowship, also of those baptized, received by letter, dismissed, excommunicated, and the number deceased, since the last association, and the total number then in fellowship.

2. The members thus convened, shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall they have any coercive power over the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the internal rites of any church in the union.

3. The association shall be governed by a regular and proper decorum; in the first place a Moderator and Clerk, chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

4. The association shall be opened and closed by prayer; only one shall speak at a time who shall rise and address the Moderator; the person thus speaking shall not be interrupted while speaking, who shall attend closely to the subject, without making any remarks on the slips or blunders made by the person who spoke before him; and every member shall have a right to speak on his turn, provided he observes these rules.

5. No person shall absent himself in time of business, without leave from the Moderator.

6. No person shall rise and speak more than three times on one subject, without leave from the Association.

7. The moderator shall have the same privilege of speaking as another member, provided the chair be filled.

8. We admit of no other title than brother, in our addresses to each other, when engaged in business.

9. Churches praying for admission into the association may petition by letter and by delegates, and upon examination, if found orthodox and orderly shall be received, and their reception manifested by the Moderator giving them the right hand of fellowship, and inviting them to a seat.

10. Every motion made and seconded, shall come under the consideration of the association, except it be withdrawn by the member who made it.

11. There shall be an association fund kept, for defraying the expenses thereof, and for the supporting of which each church in the Union may contribute voluntarily such sums as they shall think proper, and send by delegate; and such money thus sent by the churches and received by the association, shall be deposited in the hands of a Treasurer, who shall be acceptable to the associations for all sums by him received.

12. The association have a right to take notice of the church or churches that fail to attend annually, (*or as they shall think proper*) by their delegates, and enquire the cause.

13. They may admit any of the distant brethren in the ministry as assistants, who may be present at the time of their sitting, but not allow them a vote.

14. The names of the several members that compose the association, shall be enrolled by the Clerk, and called over as often as is considered necessary.

15. Any member breaking these rules shall be admonished.

16. The Minutes of the Association shall be

read, and corrected if need be, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the Association rises.

N.B. Amendments to this plan or form of government, may be made at any time by a majority of the union, when they may deem it necessary.

As the covenant indicates, these Western North Carolina churches were, for the most part, Separate Baptists and with evangelistic fervor worked in the tradition of Shubal Stearn and Daniel Morgan at Sandy Creek. Within a few years other churches joined the new Association. At its meeting in 1812 ten churches reported a membership of 455. In 1823 twenty-four churches, with 744 members, were listed. Bull Creek and Middle Fork churches were among these.

Most of the *Minutes* for the first forty years have been lost, so much of the early history is missing. The surviving *Minutes* referred to above give one very significant decision made by the group. The record of 1812 states that after discussion the delegates voted to join the General Meeting of Correspondence in North Carolina and appointed Humphrey Posey and Stephen Morgan as messengers to its next meeting. This General Meeting of Correspondence had been organized in 1811 and was the forerunner of The North Carolina Baptist State Convention. In 1814 after the meeting of the Baptist Triennial Convention in Philadelphia, the name of the General Meeting was changed to the North Carolina Missionary Society. In 1830 it became the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

From the scattered records it is apparent that a standard pattern for annual sessions was being

set. Meetings were held in member churches, alternating from one community to another, and lasted from two to four days. These lengthy sessions posed a hardship for those living at some distance (ten miles or more) from the host church. Roads were poor and travel by wagon or buggy, or on horse back was slow. It meant that those coming from a distance had to bring food for themselves and feed for their animals, and camp out or stay with friends living near the church. This, of course, was the main reason for breaking up larger associations and forming new ones more convenient to the people concerned.

The early sessions also presented problems for host churches. Church houses were small, often a one room building made of logs, with limited facilities for accommodating a larger gathering. In some cases *Minutes* record that the meetings were held in groves near the church house. In none of the *Minutes* is there any reference to the host church providing meals for the delegates—a practice taken up later when sessions lasted a shorter period and grocery stores were closer by.

Association meetings tended to follow an accepted schedule. During the early years the session always opened with a sermon. This was followed by the election of officers and the appointment of committees to serve during the following year. The remainder of the day was spent hearing the letters from member churches and from neighboring associations. Two clerks were always appointed to read these letters. This part of the program took more and more time as the number of churches increased.

On the second day committees appointed during the preceding session began giving their reports. All of these were read and often two or three persons gave supporting speeches, or on rare occasions, challenged the report. If there appeared to be considerable opposition the matter was generally "tabled" without a vote. At some time during the session member churches so wishing could present "queries" asking the Association to rule on doctrinal matters or on issues of concern to the local group. Inquiries asked about the propriety of receiving members from the Free Will Baptist churches; if foot-washing was an ordinance to be followed by all churches; whether a Baptist minister could preach or speak to a Free Will congregation; or, whether church members should join a Temperance Society. In addition to answering such questions the delegates were often asked to consider numerous resolutions dealing with subjects of immediate concern to the Association.

On Sunday, usually the last day of the session, there were three sermons, two in the morning and one in the afternoon. Preaching was a very important part of the Association meetings during the early years. Most of the churches only met and heard a sermon once a month; few could afford full-time support for a pastor. Therefore, there was a need for more religious teaching and spiritual nurturing. There was also a hunger for fellowship, so Association meetings were well attended. They were an opportunity not only to hear the Word but also to meet new people and renew acquaintances.

Recognizing the need for more Biblical teaching and Christian fellowship, also the need to encour-

age congregations to become more active, the Association began setting up Union Meetings to which members of other churches "of like faith" were invited. These meetings, three or four a year, were held in different sections of the Association so as to accommodate the people living in widely scattered communities. Such meetings were continued through the century and, no doubt, had a positive impact on efforts to spread the Gospel throughout Western North Carolina.

2

Division and Reunion

The growth experienced by the Association during the first two decades suddenly ended in 1827, when seven churches withdrew and formed the Big Ivy Association. The conflict grew out of a debate over the Calvinist doctrines of election and predestination. During the Great Awakening, 1730's and 1740's, the concept of man as a free moral agent in seeking salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior became widely accepted, and a wave of revivals swept the country from New England to the southernmost states. A number of denominations split over the issue and new rival groups were formed. The new Baptist group was known as Separate Baptists; the older group that held to the stricter Calvinist doctrines was known as Particular, or Regular, Baptists. Shubal Stearns and John Marshall, leaders among the Separate Baptists, came to the

Yadkin Valley of North Carolina and organized Sandy Creek Baptist Church. It was from this background that Baptists moved west and began establishing churches in the Mountain Region and in the Holston Valley beyond.

Of course, some Particular Baptists also moved to the frontier, fleeing persecution and discrimination by the Anglican Establishment. As could be expected conflicts often arose between the two groups. Within the French Broad Association Stephen Morgan and Garrett Deweese were leaders of the opposing factions. According to John Ammons (in his brief history of the Association) Morgan believed that God from all eternity had chosen some men for eternal life, without any regard to faith and good works, and that these would be "Called, Sanctified and Saved" while all the others were doomed to eternal damnation. Deweese and his supporters held that in the gift of His Son God had provided the means of salvation for all. They believed that sinners by their free will could choose life through repentance and faith in Christ. Again, according to Ammons, the conflict between the two groups reached a crisis when Deweese was charged with heresy and, with the assistance of Morgan and a few persons from other churches, was, by a minority vote of his church, excluded. A majority of his members stood by Deweese, however, and followed him out of the church. Within a few weeks six other churches left the French Broad and together they founded the Big Ivy Association.

The Articles of Faith drawn by this body reflected their strong convictions.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

By the Big Ivy Association

1. "We believe in one only true and living God; and notwithstanding there are three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—yet there is but one in substance, equal in power and glory, and can not be divided, either in principle or practice, and not liable to change.
2. We believe the Old and New Testaments is the word of God, and a sufficiency is therein contained for our instruction, and they are the only rule of faith and practice.
3. We believe in the doctrine of Original sin, and that all mankind, since the fall, are by nature the children of Wrath, one as much as another.
4. We believe in man's impotency, or inability to recover himself out of the fallen state he is in, therefore a Saviour is absolutely needed.
5. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ.
6. We believe in the Perseverance of the Saints in grace—that they are born again, or adopted into the family of Heaven—that they become equal heirs with Jesus Christ, and that He will raise them up at the last day.
7. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are gospel Ordinances and true believers the proper subjects, and we admit no other knowingly.

8. We believe that the true mode of Baptism is to baptize or immerse a person, by their own consent, once in water, back foremost, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
9. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and of a General judgment, where all will be judged according to the deeds done in the body.
10. We believe the punishment of the wicked will be Everlasting and the joys of the righteous will be Eternal after death.
11. We believe washing one another's feet is a command of Christ left with His disciples, and ought to be practiced by His followers.
12. We believe that no one has a right to administer the Ordinances but such as are legally called and qualified thereunto.
13. We believe it is the duty of all church members to attend their church meetings, and it is the duty of the church to deal with them for neglecting the same.
14. We believe it is the duty of all church members to contribute to the support of the gospel and defraying all reasonable expenses of the church, never neglecting the poor, according to their several abilities.
15. We believe that any doctrine that goes to encourage or indulge people in their sins, or cause them to settle down on anything short of saving faith in Christ, for salvation, is erroneous, and all such doctrines will be rejected by us.
16. None of the above-named articles shall be so construed as to hold with Particular and

Eternal Election and Reprobation, or so as to make God partial, either directly or indirectly, so as to injure any of the children of men."

A number of articles in this covenant are of special interest in that they had not been included in the Covenant of 1807. Article 11 declared that the washing of feet is a command of Christ. Article 13 called on churches to deal with those who failed to regularly attend services. Article 14 declared it a duty of members to give financial support for church ministries. Article 16 disavowed the belief in Election and Eternal Reprobation. Some of these provisions seem quite farsighted, especially the assertion that members have a duty to support the church. In that day few people really believed that.

In spite of the dissention and emotional frustration caused by the break-up, both associations continued to grow. The Big Ivy grew faster because its members were deeply committed to evangelism. Its seven churches with 233 members in 1827 increased to twenty-five churches with 732 members by 1844. Gabriels Creek Baptist Church was one of its new members.

The French Broad continued to grow but at a much slower pace, and over the next several years lost a number of congregations seeking dismissal to form new associations, or to join older ones. In 1829 churches in Haywood and ~~and~~ westward asked for dismissal to organize the Tuckaseigee Association. In 1838 nine churches in South Buncombe and Henderson Counties requested dismissal to form the Salem Association. These withdrawals left

only eleven churches in the parent body, but by 1848 new congregations had been added and the *Minutes* of that year reported eighteen churches. The next year, however, ten churches were dismissed to join the new Roan Mountain Association, and in 1855 seven churches in Madison and Buncombe Counties withdrew to organize the New Found Association.

These last seven were: Spring Creek, Bear Creek, New Found, Turkey Creek, Bethel (in Buncombe), Flat Creek, and Little Mountain. Through the years other churches have asked dismissal but never in such large numbers as these.

The issue which had divided the two associations gradually began to lose importance. In the first place, the elitist doctrine of Election ran counter to everything people on the frontier believed—and the Mountain Region remained frontier in life style well on toward 1900. Frontier philosophy held that every person had an equal opportunity and that success or failure depended on decision and action of the individual and not on some predestined order of life. Even as the French Broad split in 1827 there were many church members who rejected the strict Calvinist doctrines, and in time it became apparent to leaders on both sides that the differences which separated them were largely a matter of interpretation of terms rather than basic doctrines and that beliefs they held in common were more important than the concepts on which they disagreed. Even Morgan began to modify his views, according to John Ammons.

In 1847, twenty years after the break-up, the

French Broad received a letter from Big Ivy asking for correspondence with them on certain principles. In response to this letter the delegates approved the following resolution:

Whereas, the Big Ivy Association have [sic] made application by letter, or petition, to correspond with the French Broad Association, without any definite terms of Union.

Resolved, therefore, that we are in favor of a Union, and recommend Big Ivy Association, by their churches, to send up letters and delegates to our next Association, in the ordinary way: And a Union can be effected honorable to both parties without further concessions.

The French Broad also appointed a five-man committee, with Stephen Morgan as one member, to meet with a committee from Big Ivy to formulate a plan for reconciliation. This joint committee drew up a number of recommendations which the French Board accepted. The first of these state that the Big Ivy Constitution, with a few modifications, would be adapted by the consolidated body, and the second recommended that the united body be known as the French Broad Baptist Association. Thus, the older organization would retain its name but surrender the doctrines of Election and Reprobation. A date of September 21, 1850 was set for an organizational meeting of the two bodies for the purpose of completing the consolidation, but minutes of such a meeting have been lost. Subsequent records, however, indicate that the meeting did

take place. (See appendix for a copy of the constitution drawn for the consolidated body.)

Although the Constitution was accepted by delegates from both the French Broad and Big Ivy in joint session, there remained a small group, including John Ammons, who were unhappy with the clearly stated rejection of the doctrines which had caused the separation in 1827. As a final chapter to the whole dispute, the question was again brought before the Association when it met with the Flag Pond Church in August 1880. The *Minutes* of that session simply reported that a resolution offered by S.T. Crawford was adopted. It read: "Resolved, that the Constitution of this body be amended by striking out Article Seventh." That article was the statement rejecting the doctrines of Eternal Election and Reprobation. There was no discussion recorded, although there surely must have been some. The *Minutes* simply state that the Resolution was approved. The Constitution, as thus amended, neither approved nor disapproved of the doctrines. This seems to indicate that by 1880 the Association accepted the idea that it was all right for members to differ in their interpretation of the Scriptures.

After the consolidation and the disputes which had consumed so much of their time and attention were settled, churches in the Association experienced a great renewal of interest and commitment to the work of the Kingdom. Revivals were held throughout the Association and many new members were added to church rolls. Even though the French Broad lost seven churches in 1855, its

membership grew as new churches continued to request membership.

In this more stable atmosphere congregations began to turn their attention to other matters. Temperance and the use of alcoholic beverages was of growing concern to the whole region. Drunkenness was a serious problem in all of the mountain counties largely because the making of whiskey, brandy, etc., was the second most important business in the area—second only to farming. It was legal and it was one of the few ways people had of making any money. This economic reality led churches to move cautiously on the issue. In 1851 the New Found Church presented a “query” to the Annual Session asking what a church should do with members who join the Sons of Temperance. In answer the Association advised the churches to neither make, sell, nor use “distilled spirits, except for medical, mechanical or sacramental purposes” but warned members against being “equally yoked together with unbelievers.” Several years later as opposition to the making and use of alcoholic beverages of all kinds gained momentum, the Association changed its position and urged members to join temperance societies and to do something about the problem. Temperance committees were appointed every year to report on the matter and in later years the Association adopted strong statements denouncing the use of such beverages and advised churches to “deal with” those who used them. Drunkenness came to be one of the most frequent causes for exclusion of members from church rolls.

In 1852 the Annual Session elected a Board of

Managers to recommend ministers to "ride and preach among the destitute" (meaning sections where there were no Baptist churches) and to raise money to pay them. Three ministers were selected for this work: Elder R. Patterson, Elder William Keith, and Elder H. W. Gilbert. At the meeting in 1853 these men reported on their activities. Patterson had given 81 days to the work and baptized 117 converts; Keith had labored 34 days and baptized about 70 persons; and Gilbert had given 60 days and had baptized 56 converts, and had helped organize two new churches.

The number of ministers appointed to this work varied from year to year. In 1855 nineteen ministers were appointed. That year the Committee on Destitution, which became a standing committee, reported to the Association on recommendations for expansion and improvement in the work. It specifically recommended that the "missionaries" work in Laurel, and in Pine Creek and Shut-in Creek areas. In 1861 it recommended holding protracted meetings in the Reems Creek area and in Shelton Laurel.

There seems to have been general support for this ministry "within the bounds" of the Association, but to the question of doing mission work beyond the local communities there was generally a negative response. According to John Ammon's history of the Association the question of sending missionaries and supporting home and foreign missions first came before the Association in 1848. He quotes a statement from the *Session Minutes*: "Notice the missionary question, and finding that all the churches in our Association are not hearty

in this matter, we agree to refer it until our next session, hoping our brethren may consider this matter and give liberty of conscience on either hand." Generally speaking, members of the churches believed that the "missionary scheme" was purely mercenary and that the missionaries were just trying to get money. An episode from Bull Creek Church illustrates a wide spread feeling on the subject. When a representative from the State Convention asked to speak to that congregation on missions, the pastor, David Blackwell, agreed only on condition that he be allowed to give the opening prayer. As the service began he knelt and prayed: "O Lord, have mercy upon us. What shall we do? The missionaries are upon us!" Gradually this narrow view began to give way, largely due to influential leaders who brought annual reports calling for associational support. It has to be said, however, there was more discussion than action and it would be several decades before gifts to missions demonstrated very much commitment.

A discussion of education was on the agenda of Association meetings as early as 1850. There was real concern about this subject, at least among the leaders, for their children were growing up without the benefits of an education. There were very few elementary schools in the Mountain Region, and no high schools or academies to provide advanced learning. In 1853 the Association passed a resolution recommending two schools being supported by the Holston Association as places for study. In 1854 the Education Committee recommended the establishment of a school within the French Broad, and in 1856 the committee returned with a report of victory:

We rejoice to say, that the dark and benighted Ages of Ignorance and Superstition, are fast receding, and the bright and resplendent rays of Education, which culminate and shine with that serene brilliancy which illuminates the intellect, and teaches and prepares men to do right, is gaining the pre-eminence. We are happy to say, that we now have an Institution in our midst, under the control of the Association, ready to commence a session this fall. And we flatter ourselves that we will be able to commence with near one hundred scholars.

Over the years the Association urged churches to help pay expenses of young men called into the ministry so they could study at Mars Hill. The Association itself paid the expenses of a number of young ministers. For years Baptist churches had been willing to accept "God-called" men whether they had any education or not, but by the 1850's there was a growing awareness that men who stood in the pulpit needed to be academically trained. On a number of occasions delegates to annual sessions warned churches against "sending men out" who were not firm in the faith and were not prepared academically to teach and preach.

When the Western North Carolina churches broke away from the North Carolina State Baptist Convention in 1844 and organized a convention of their own, the French Broad Association gave its support to this movement. Each year delegates were appointed to attend the Western Convention, and the funds needed to support the delegation

were appropriated. According to the rules of the Western Convention churches must contribute five dollars for each delegate attending the meetings.

Table A

Year	R'd by Letter	R'd by Baptism	Dismissed by letter	Excluded	Restored	Total Members	No. of Churches
1830	29	34	7	13	74	568	17
1833	20	59	9	10	11	558	16
1841	10	17	19	13	7	497	12
1842	10	9	45	27	2	462	13
1843	8	8	24	16	1	455	13
1844	35	250	114	7	15	770	15
1845	44	166	72	20	12	989	17
1846	39	26	60	20	4	1104	18
1847	53	75	56	27	11	1003	18
1850	23	43	89	13	8	847	16
1851	57	130	61	20	6	1047	17
1852	74	109	121	15	7	1164	20
1853	66	426	87	19	20	1468	20
1854	53	25	92	32	9	1489	24
1855	61	70	61	42	12	1528	26
1856	88	251	102	39	23	1507	20
1860	82	206	66	39	30	1593	20
1862	46	88	24	21	5	1588	19
1865	20	85	48	18	6	1488	18
1867	101	107	81	88	11	1612	17
1868	82	101	147	23	33	1686	18
1870	113	288	164	36	29	1808	22

(Chart continued on page 24)

Table A (continued from page 23)

Year	R'd by Letter	R'd by Baptism	Dismissed by letter	Excluded	Restored	Total Members	No. of Churches
1871	130	206	152	67	29	2159	26
1872	107	111	103	34	8	2075	26
1873	123	194	157	37	31	2277	26
1874	92	90	194	59	28	2103	27
1875	62	79	87	39	13	2223	29
1876	123	194	157	57	31	2277	30
1877	70	82	68	46	17	2243	31
1878	89	143	85	67	34	2430	34
1880	103	197	105	51	29	2558	35
1881	109	102	87	50	22	2717	34
1882	102	300	94	43	26	2923	35
1885			76	56	22		
1886	97	174	114	50	25	2663	30
1887	99	161	94	33	22	2747	31
1888	138	217	146	49	18	2440	27
1889	74	163	97	65	16	2482	27
1890	157	281	176	61	22	2641	27
1891	103	154	117	70	20	2511	23
1892	109	254	87	51	29	2662	24
1893	147	171	116	115	18	2923	27
1894	178	214	160	87	31	2650	24
1896	82	160	163	54	35	3171	29
1897	50	115	93	70	26	2979	30
1898	62	243	116	97	14		26
1899						2858	
1900	123	206	140	45	35	2763	28

3

The War Years

On the first day of its annual session in 1861 the French Broad adopted the following Resolution:

Whereas, the Constitution of the United States, recognized each State thereof as the equal of each other State, and all the citizens of one, are equal to the citizens of another: And whereas a sectional party has been organized in the Northern States, which has from its organization disregarded the equal rights of Southern States and Southern citizens—have elected a President upon their sectional platform, who in utter disregard of the *Constitution* and the *Laws of Justice* has made war upon *Southern States and Institutions*, making it necessary for us to call our Soldiery into the field of Battle; who are there

now contending against the *invading foe*; and as we deem it our duty to remember them at a THRONE OF GRACE; therefore Resolved, That we, the delegates composing the French Broad Baptist Association, meet each morning during the sitting of this body at 9 o'clock, and spend one hour in prayer for the *Southern Confederacy*, the *Provisional President and his Cabinet*, and the *Commander of our Armies with our Volunteers*, that *God may bless us, give Wisdom to our rulers, lead our officers, preserve our soldiers, early give us peace, and make us a Nation famous for devotion to the Service of God*.

According to the *Minutes* this proposal was carried out with delegates meeting for prayer each morning.

On the second day of the session another resolution was passed.

Resolved, whereas it has become apparent that the iniquitous and unholy crusade engaged in against the South under the lead of Lincoln and his advisors, is subversive of the rights of a free people, and a downright stroke at the Christian Religion —inhuman in its character, and only carried on for the destruction of our property, and the final subjugation of our people; therefore

Resolved, That we advise our churches to consecrate and set apart their regular church-meeting days for fasting and prayer, that

God may turn our enemies from their evil design-avert the evils from our land that now threaten it, and that God may bless and prosper the Arms of the Southern Confederacy.

From the vantage point of a century and half later it seems strange that delegates to the 1861 Session approved such a clearly partisan position when the Association lay within a territory almost equally divided in its sympathy for the Confederacy and its loyalty to the Union. Perhaps an explanation can be found in the fact that more of the churches, and especially the stronger ones, were in communities where supporters of the Confederacy prevailed. At the time there were few organized churches in the sections along the Tennessee border and that was the Unionist stronghold. Even with limited knowledge of the history of the period, it can not be assumed, however, that individual churches shared the "approved" position of the Association.

In keeping with its support for men in service, the 1862 Session voted to take up a collection for the purpose of distributing Bibles and tracts among the soldiers from western North Carolina. John Ammons, who had presented the matter to the group, was put in charge of the project.

The *Minutes* for 1863 and 1864 are missing, and there is no way of knowing whether or not the Association met during those most difficult years and to what extent the work of the Kingdom was being carried on. Local church records might give some insight into these matters, but none of these

were available to the writer-and few even exist. Stories of the times and subsequent records of the French Broad Association do confirm the fact that the association avoided another outright division like that of 1827. A number of associations in western North Carolina did not fare so well, however, as splits led to the formation of three new associations made up of churches whose members sympathized with the Union. These were the Stoney Fork, the Primitive, and the Mountain Union associations

Although the War came to an end in 1865, a lot of "fighting" continued. A message to the Association from Little Ivy Church in 1865 reveals the continuing problem. The message implored member churches to keep all "schisms" growing out of the "past excitement" out of the Association, and "thereby save the cause of Christ." In response the assembled delegates voted to advise churches "to labor to keep unity of the spirit and the bonds of peace, and never suffer their political differences to affect their Christian union." They went on to say that if any church had "dealt with any of her members for their politics, to rescind her act at once." In further support of this position, the delegates passed a resolution recommending that churches and ministers do all they could to restore peace and to hold prayer meetings to pray for our "Chief Rulers and those who are in authority." The Association as a body had called the War off and was ready to move ahead.

Moving ahead, however, was not so easy. The effects of four years of death and destruction could not be so easily dismissed. Churches had been

weakened by loss of members on the battle fields, and as a result of the bitterness engendered by the war.

Moreover, a pervasive feeling of discouragement and hopelessness lingered in the wake of defeat, and in this spirit individuals, and families, joined a trek into the West to find homesteads and escape their troubled communities. Membership rolls declined and some congregations were almost wiped out. Ammons, in his history, states that Mars Hill Church was almost annihilated. The college, of which the Association was so proud, was closed for a number of years, buildings either burned or wrecked by occupying troops. Churches moved in and out of the Association as if they did not know where they wanted to be. In 1865 the Marshall Church asked for letter of dismissal to join the New Found Association. Sometime between 1861 and 1870 Gabriels Creek also left the Association to join the New Found. Gabriels Creek returned to the French Broad in 1871 and Marshall in 1878. Walnut Creek, Big Laurel, and Mt. Zion churches asked for letters of dismissal, but the Association asked them to wait until representatives could work with them and try to "make the matter satisfactory." In 1882 four churches were released to form the Buncombe Association. Many other congregations came and went almost every year.

Annual reports on the State of the Churches during these years frequently presented a discouraging picture. In 1868, T. J. Murphy, chairman of the Committee, wrote: "After a close examination we have concluded that the majority of the churches

are at peace with the world, the flesh, and the Wicked One... Therefore, Resolved, that we recommend the churches to awake to a sense of their duty, and wage against every form of wickedness, and pray God to help them that they may come off more than conquerors through Christ." In 1870, the Committee reported that some congregations had comfortable places to worship but that others were almost worshiping out of doors. In 1874, the Association sought to remedy that situation by declaring that deacons have the duty not only to support the pastor but also to erect comfortable places of worship. Yearly records of local churches also revealed a serious problem in attendance at regular meetings. Bitterness left from the War, lack of interest, and general apathy of the period help explain the problem in part, but weather and road conditions were also a cause of many absences. In the rural area members often had to travel several miles to church, and during the years immediately following the War there were few if any vehicles and almost no horses or other work animals for transportation-these had been destroyed by the War. Furthermore, there was no money to replace them. Neither was there money for the church. Church expenses in that day only involved "paying the preacher" and keeping the church house repaired, but often there was no money even for these things. Most of the time the preacher's "salary" was the collection taken up after the sermon. The "collection" was more often counted in pennies than dollars.

The Committee on State of the Ministry also gave very negative reports. In 1874 the report

stated that while some ministers were doing good work, others were not qualified to speak from the pulpit. In 1876 the report read: "Most are of good moral character, and honest aims, yet, candor compels us to say that some of them are men of very moderate abilities." The report went on to say that it was "accepted that lawyers, doctors, and politicians be men of good natural abilities, yet many of our churches send forth men as ministers that lack almost every natural qualification." In conclusion, the committee urged churches "to help those with brains to get an education" and to ordain no uneducated men. A call for a better prepared ministry was repeated in almost every annual report.

One interesting but tragic policy of churches during the post war era, and continuing on through the century, was the practice of excluding members, and often without much effort to reclaim them. (See Table A). It would be unreasonable to expect complete harmony in congregations that had been torn asunder by hatreds and grudges left over from war experiences. When neighbors refused to speak to each other during the week, it would be unlikely that they could agree with each other on Sunday. At times there were also disputes over the interpretations of church doctrines, but perhaps the major cause for expelling members was found in personal conduct.

Generally speaking, people of Madison County and Western North Carolina were honest in their relations with one another, believed in the virtue of women, and were essentially moral in their behavior, but life in the area retained many features

associated with the frontier until late in the nineteenth century. There was much drinking, rowdiness, and fighting at public gatherings, whether they were school commencements, church socials, or political elections. Since local governments were unable to do anything substantial about the social and moral development of the people, the church was, at the time, the only agency that could influence patterns of living. To fulfill this responsibility, churches taught the laws of God as found in the Bible and with strict discipline held all members responsible for their conduct, both public and private. Members were called before the congregation for drunkenness, swearing, immorality, lying, and violating the rules and regulations of the church. Members were also tried and excluded for failure to attend services over an extended period of time, for joining a church of another denomination, and for doctrinal deviation.

There is no doubt that the church served a great social need in its strict discipline of members on matters of moral conduct and family responsibility, but as far as the spiritual welfare of the church and its membership was concerned, the method used could scarcely be called a redemptive one. Excluded members were denied letters of dismissal to join another church until they gave proof of repentance and asked the congregation for forgiveness. The greater number of those excluded, however, never tried to make "satisfaction" or to return to the church; they simply remained outside any spiritual fellowship. Records of local churches indicate that few pastors during these years made sincere efforts to reclaim those lost to the fold.

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Renewal and Expansion

In 1870 political "Reconstruction" officially ended in North Carolina, and although there would be many years before the bitterness and strife engendered by that period had passed, life for most people began to take on a more normal pattern. The renewed feeling of peace and security was reflected in church life. True, there were still questions to be settled at Annual Sessions as congregations sought clear definitions of Baptist beliefs and church policy. In 1877 the delegates were asked to determine the ingredients to be used in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Their answer was: "nothing but juice of the vine." Another query asked for a ruling on those eligible to partake of this sacrament. The answer: only those who had been "scripturally baptized." One church wanted to know if it should recognize immersion by Pedo Baptists as being sufficient. The answer was a

“No”. Still another questioned if it was “Gospel order to subject a member to church discipline for communing with the Methodists.” The answer was a resounding “Yes.” Bull Creek Church asked if it was right for a Baptist church to organize Baptist Sunday Schools in Baptist communities. The matter was discussed and then put on the table with no decision made. Mt. Zion Church asked if baptism is essential for salvation. The answer, which seems a bit puzzling, was that baptism is essential to salvation but not essential to regeneration. Upper Laurel Congregation asked if the discipline of the church was contained solely in the New Testament. The answer: Yes.

Two congregations had to be “dealt with.” Little Creek Church was debarred from the Association because of the conduct and teaching of its pastor. Shortly afterward, however, the church made an apology and was returned to full membership. Foster’s Creek Church was also the subject of an investigation. Internal dissension had split the congregation into two factions, both of which sent delegates to the Annual Session. The Association, however, rejected both delegations and appointed a committee to work with the church and try to settle the dispute.

In spite of these uncertainties and isolated cases of trouble in local congregations, many efforts were being made to improve church ministries. The Association took steps to assist weak churches. In 1878 it pledged support for the Marshall Church, which was having difficulty in securing and paying a pastor. The Association later helped them with their new building which

was dedicated on September 3, 1905. The Association continued to employ ministers to work with weak churches in Ivy and Upper Laurel sections. In 1894 three men were appointed for this work on a yearly salary of \$60 each. The number of ministers appointed varied from year to year; in 1895 nineteen men were assigned this task. In 1898 the Association employed its first full-time "missionary" to preach in "destitute areas and to work with all the pastors, especially those serving weak churches at Marshall and Jewel Hill, and those in the Shelton Laurel area. One reason given for this special effort was the fact that Presbyterians were "spending thousands of dollars" on schools in the area and were attempting to "establish Presbyterianism among the people."

A scarcity of trained ministers and leaders continued to be a major problem for churches in the Association. For years there had been few schools in the whole Mountain Region so there were not many educated persons to teach or preach. Moreover, churches were financially poor and could not afford to pay full time pastors. As late as 1888 pastors' salaries were as low as \$12 or \$25 a year; only three churches in the Association paid their pastors as much as \$100 a year. Such salaries forced ministers to have other jobs to make a living for their families and, in turn, that made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to visit and minister to individuals and families in their care. In an attempt to help with this problem, the Association began encouraging churches to call full time pastors, or at least, increase the number of religious services held each month. The Association also

continued to appoint ministers to work with weak churches and at times gave financial aid to those most in need.

Special efforts were also made to provide training for pastors. In 1873 the Annual Session voted to hold meetings for ministers and deacons each year. These would provide some training as well as encouragement for new leaders. A more significant step was taken in 1897, when the Association established a Minister's Institute. The Institute would meet twice a year on a fifth Sunday week for four days, Wednesday through Sunday. The first Institute was held in October 1899 at the East Fork Baptist Church. It was so successful that it was recommended that such study sessions be held annually.

The need for trained ministers led the Association to actively support Mars Hill College. Reports of annual meetings traced the restoration and reopening of the College, which had been forced to close for a number of years. The *Minutes* of 1882 announced that the school would open on Monday, November 13 for a ten months term. The published report also carried an advertisement for the college. It stated that tuition fees would be \$5.00 per session for the primary school, \$7.50 for the intermediate school, and \$10.00 for "Higher English." Board could be found with good families on reasonable terms.

Subsequent reports told of a new building being erected and new classes being added to the curriculum. In 1896 President Maury of the college announced that the new building (now Founder's Hall) had been completed. It would

provide a chapel area, two large society halls, and four classrooms. The pressing need, he stated, was for money to complete a boarding house for students.

When Dr. R. L. Moore assumed leadership at the college in 1897, he launched a major drive to put the school on a sound financial basis. In response to his appeal for help the Association appointed a committee of "one live man" from each church to take contributions "of money, grain, meal, vegetables and anything else that can be used toward boarding young men for the ministry." The Association also appointed a committee of five to decide upon the need and worthiness of the young men seeking admission. The next year Dr. Moore reported that three young ministers from the Association had attended the college during the previous year. One of them had gone on to Wake Forest College; the other two had returned for a second year at Mars Hill. All ministerial students would have free tuition, he announced, but that many needed help with other expenses.

In 1902 the Association voted to "adopt" Mars Hill as its school and took up a collection of \$104.00 as a contribution toward its financial needs.

In 1877 delegates to the Annual Session voted to divide the Association into four districts for administrative purposes. In the isolated and scattered nature of communities in the Mountain Region it was difficult for church members to attend committee meetings, or even general meetings. It was thought that a district system would help with this problem. There is little recorded

comment on this plan and after a few years it was abolished.

An announcement in the 1887 *Minutes* heralded a new day for the Association. The report stated that three congregations were erecting new church buildings. Since that time almost every congregation has built and expanded their facilities several times.

Another innovation began to give annual meetings special meaning. In 1887, when the Association met with the Mars Hill Church, the "ladies of the church" served luncheon for all those in attendance. In 1890 the *Minutes* state that the "ladies of Terry Fork Baptist Church" served lunch when the Association met with them. This practice was soon to become a regular feature of annual sessions.

As early as 1855 the Association had set up a committee on Sabbath Schools and had recommended that such schools be established in every church, but the movement to carry out that recommendation was very slow. For years it encountered not only indifference but also opposition in many congregations. A hurdle to be overcome was the question as to what kind of schools these "Sunday schools" would be—Union schools open to people of all denominational leanings, or schools closely associated with and run by Baptist churches. During the first years there were schools of both kinds, but in time the concept of Baptist schools won out. A special group, who opposed the movement, included those who held that the teaching ministry was not scriptural and therefore should not be a part of the church. This belief, without a

doubt, was due to misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about the whole program.

The North Carolina Sunday School Association had been organized to promote the movement and they were joined in this effort by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. John Ammons served these two agencies for two years as a Sunday School missionary working throughout the state. He became one of the staunch supporters for the movement in the French Broad.

In 1856 *Minutes* listed three Sunday Schools "in lively progression" but expressed regrets for the wide spread negligence of churches in adding this teaching ministry. In 1860 it was reported that half the churches had Bible schools, but since there were no forms for reporting on the ministry one can not be certain if that was true or not. It was noted that many of the schools were held only during the summer months. In 1869, thirteen (of the 22) churches had Sunday Bible studies, with 82 teachers and 727 "scholars". They were using literature published by the American Sunday School Union. In addition to these there was one "colored school" with 7 teachers and 48 students, also 5 union schools with 23 teachers and 260 students. In 1881 the Association authorized the printing of standard forms for reporting on church activities, but it was some time before preserved records contain any full reports.

In October 1886 the French Broad Baptist Sunday School Convention was organized to help promote the teaching ministry. The Conventions were held for two or three day sessions during which problems facing the schools were discussed

and solutions were sought. The question of attendance was always on the agenda. One delegate reported that in his church the adults did not think they needed to attend, that the schools were only for children and young people. The question arose as to how they could get children of poor families enrolled. It was agreed that the solution to this problem was to provide appropriate clothes for the children and their parents and to invite both to attend. Sessions on improved teaching were included on every program. The matter of appropriate literature was also a problem, but in time a number of publications became available. The *Baptist Teacher*, published by the American Baptist Publication Society, and *Kind Words*, put out by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, were the first of these. Later the Convention began to promote the use of *Home Field*, *Charity and Children*, and the *Biblical Recorder*,

The 1904 Association Minutes carries the first full record on Sunday Schools. That year 15 out of the 23 churches reported on schools, although two of these, one at Marshall and one at Locust Grove, were union schools. Bull Creek, Mars Hill, Madison Seminary, Walnut Creek, and Forks of Ivy kept their schools open 12 months of the year; the others did not report on schedules. Mars Hill had the largest school with 125 average attendance (this was perhaps due to the fact that resident college students were required to attend); others reported attendance roughly in the thirties and forties. In 1905 nine churches said they were spending money on their schools, presumably paying for the literature.

No doubt one of the most serious handicaps faced by all Sunday Schools was the lack of trained leaders. In 1898 Mars Hill College began holding chautauqua assemblies each summer. These were planned specifically to offer training for Sunday School teachers and other church workers. Dr. Moore campaigned for these, recommending that all churches send their leaders to the sessions. To supplement these chautauqua experiences he urged churches to have study periods for their own teachers each Sunday, and he advised them to use literature published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

As the Sunday School movement was slowly accepted by churches, so was a tolerance of missions beginning to grow within the Association. Annual Sessions began taking offerings for Home and Foreign missions — in 1872, \$15.00; in 1875, \$22.50; in 1876, \$5.50; in 1880, \$13.50. In 1875 the delegates passed a resolution earnestly soliciting churches to take monthly collections for foreign missions and set aside the first Sunday in October for a season of worship and of gathering contributions for foreign missions. In 1877 the Committee on Missions recommended that all churches "Organize themselves into missionary societies to collect money for Home Missions". In 1882 Seven churches gave to foreign missions and five gave to home missions, but in 1887 only three churches gave anything to missions. In his repeated reports on missions, John Ammons still asserted that most of the churches continued to be anti-missionary.

As time passed, the Association began to re-

ceive representatives from the Mission Board of the Western North Carolina Baptist Convention and other agencies to speak on missions. In 1891 Professor J. E. White of Mars Hill College challenged the churches to raise \$600 for the support of one missionary, and the delegates approved a resolution to accept the challenge. Reports for the next few years, however, do not indicate that the churches kept that promise.

In 1892 the Association joined in observing the Centennial Anniversary of Foreign Missions, the one hundred years since William Carey sounded the signal for the movement. The Southern Baptist convention, under the direction of the Foreign Mission Board, had set a goal of raising \$250,000 for missions. They hoped to send 100 new missionaries with this money. The delegates to the French Board pledged \$365, but the gifts fell short of this goal. The churches only gave \$195.38 for all mission causes. In 1894 one church gave to State Missions, 4 gave to Home Missions, 6 gave to Foreign Missions, and 9 gave to the Baptist Orphanage. There was still no real commitment to missions as the Association came to the end of the century.

During the last three decades of the 19th century, the Association made several important decisions, some more significant than others.

(1) In 1876 the Annual Session voted to support the Baptist Orphanage being maintained temporarily at Mars Hill, then permanently at Thomasville. Churches responded to this ministry with greater interest than to any other mission work.

(2) In 1878 the delegates accepted a plan for

limiting delegations to the annual meetings. With no limit on the number of delegates a church could send, the sessions had become unwieldy and beyond seating capacity of any of the churches. The resolution which was approved provided for two messengers from each church with a membership of 50 or less; and larger churches could send two and one additional representative for each 50 members on their rolls. No ceiling was set at the time. Of course, there was no limit placed on visitors and ten years later the *Annual Report* stated that 1000 persons stood outside the Mars Hill Church because they could not get into the building.

(3) In 1891 the Association elected one messenger, with two alternates, to attend the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1894 it appointed messengers (always referred to as delegates) to attend the North Carolina State Baptist Convention.

(4) In 1894 the Session passed a resolution "disclaiming any right or wish" of the Association to "dictate to the churches the qualifications of persons to membership." These matters were to be left to the "untrammeled will of the church."

(5) In 1898 the Association employed the Reverend T. M. Honeycutt to work full time "within the bounds of the Association." He was to preach at "destitute points" and to work with all the pastors, particularly with those serving weak churches. This appointment was the forerunner of the present director of missions.

(6) The 1900 Session invited the New Found Association to unite with the French Broad. A committee was appointed to confer with a commit-

tee from the New Found. The two groups met and came to an agreement in favor of reunion, but when the New Found met for its annual session, the delegates voted against the proposal.

(7) In 1902 the delegates approved a resolution calling for the exclusion of church members who drank, or "manufactured" alcoholic beverages. This strong stand was, no doubt, in response to the growing concern about the use of alcohol in a machine age — it endangered the lives of other persons. In 1903 the State adopted a limited prohibition on the manufacture and sale of "spirituous liquors"; in 1909 a state wide prohibition was enacted.

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A New Century

*O*n August 28, 1907 the French Broad celebrated its 100th Anniversary. It met with the Mars Hill Baptist Church in the auditorium of Mars Hill College, which was celebrating its own 50th birthday. During the day participants reviewed the history of the Association, and of the college. Both had much for which they could be grateful, and proud.

Looking back over a hundred years the Association could recognize growth in membership and progress in its ministries. In 1807 there were six small churches; in 1907 there were twenty-three churches with a membership of 2844. Meanwhile, more than forty-five other congregations had belonged to the French Broad but had been dismissed to form four new associations or to join other more conveniently located groups. It had experienced one division in 1829 but had recov-

ered when both factions chose to reunite in 1849. Although it suffered losses and disruption of ministries, it survived the tragic era of the Civil War and emerged with new vigor as that period passed. With increased commitment the Association renewed its mission work in "destitute" areas and initiated a movement to provide a teaching ministry through Sunday Schools. Recognizing the importance of an educated ministry, it promoted the establishment of Mars Hill College and in 1902 adopted it as the Association's college.

New ministries and expansion of older ones were more easily achieved in this new century than had been possible before. Madison County and Western North Carolina were enjoying a prosperity they had never known before. Farmers had learned to grow flue-cured tobacco which new tobacco companies were ready to buy. During the 1890's and the early years of the twentieth century lumber companies began cutting the rich stand of timber in the mountains and hundreds of men found employment with these. Tourism had made Hot Springs one of the most popular resorts in Eastern America. A railroad between Goldsboro and Knoxville, by the way of Asheville, had been completed in 1882 and the region had been opened up to greater economic development. Consequently, there was more money for church expenses, for the support of missions and other charities. It was easier for delegates to attend State and Southwide meetings and to bring in representatives from these organizations to help promote new programs. There was also more money for schools and under the leadership of the "Education Governor",

Charles B. Aycock, a state wide system of schools became a reality. Elementary schools and new high schools not only provided educational opportunities for all children but also helped to train leaders for churches. All of these developments had a significant impact on the Association and its program of work.

The Laurel Mission, as the work in the "destitute areas" came to be called, had been a positive approach to local missions from the beginning in 1852, but it grew in importance from decade to decade. Without a doubt it was one of the most significant programs the Association has ever undertaken. In 1852 a board of five men was appointed to collect money to pay ministers serving as "riding missionaries" in the West Fork of Laurel and Shut-in Creek Areas. Existing records indicate that the work was continued through the fifties but was suspended during the war years. In 1868, after the war was over, the Association revived the ministry by appointing "two missionaries to labor in the bounds of the Association" and elected a missionary board to be responsible for the work. A Committee on Destitution kept the project before the churches at Annual Sessions, and each year the appointed missionaries reported on the miles they had traveled, the number of sermons they had preached, the number of conversions made, the number of persons baptized, and occasionally on the number of churches they had helped to organize. In 1894 the Association employed three men and assigned them to specific churches or fields of work: one for the Jewel Hill Church, one for Union Valley-on-Laurel, and one to work in the Ivy and

Upper Laurel sections. They were each promised a salary of \$60 a year. In 1898 the French Broad took its first step toward setting up a permanent staff when it hired the Reverend T. M. Honeycutt to serve full time, to preach at "destitute points" and to work with all pastors in the association. Honeycutt served in this capacity for a number of years.

In 1915 the delegates at the Annual Session voted to use all the money given to State Missions to support the churches at Walnut and the surrounding communities, and a committee was appointed to manage distribution of the funds. At the same time the delegates voted to employ the Reverend W. P. McCarter to preach at Walnut, Union Valley, Brigman's Chapel, Laurel Seminary, Chapel Hill, Hopewell, and Piney Grove. According to Annual Reports his work was quite fruitful in that a number of the "preaching points" developed into organized churches and new preaching points were added to the ministry. When McCarter resigned in October 1919, J. C. Pipes, who was a student at Mars Hill College at the time, was asked to take his place. He continued as pastor of Hopewell, which had become an organized church in 1916, Walnut, White Rock, Laurel Seminary, and Brigman's Chapel. The work was interrupted, however, by the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 and all services were cancelled for several months. In 1920 Pipes gave up the work and the ministry was divided between two persons: the Reverend Shuford Jenkins for Walnut, and the Reverend Perry Sprinkle for the other points. Sprinkle resigned the next spring and the Reverend H. D. Corn took his place. S. C. Briggs, the Association

Colporteur, filled in after Corn resigned. Jenkins supplied Hopewell as well as Walnut for one year but left the field in 1921.

The above statements indicate the work in Laurel had been interrupted for a number of years by frequent changes in personnel, but in 1923 the Reverend R. P. McCracken was put in charge of the field. At the same time the work received a big boost when the State Board of Missions gave \$500 to help finance the ministry. McCracken proved to be a very successful leader, and one with deep insight as to the real needs of the churches. He gave himself fully to preaching and evangelism, but he pointed out in his annual report that the greatest need in the area at that time was not evangelism but education and instruction in church doctrines. In 1924 he reported a good year at Walnut, although it had lost one third of its membership during the war (WWI), but that he had not been able to effectively cover the whole field. Clearly the work had become more than one man could handle, and the Association was faced with the question of abandoning the more remote areas or hiring additional workers. The next year they employed Miss Della Huggins to serve in the Laurel area on a salary of \$25 a month.

In addition to providing leaders for the Laurel mission field, the Association helped a number of new congregations finance the construction of church houses. In 1910 it was reported that Union Valley had its building closed in but needed \$75 to purchase finishing materials. The Walnut people needed \$300 to finish their new building. The Association asked Grape Vine, Foster's Creek, Big

Laurel, and Big Laurel Seminary to raise the \$75 needed at Union Valley; the other churches would raise \$200 for Walnut. In 1913 the delegates learned that the Walnut church was finished except for painting and hanging a bell. In response they took up an offering of \$8.60 to help pay for the bell. McCarter reported that the congregation at Brigman's Chapel had almost completed a new church house.

By 1924 the Association had begun to phase out its Laurel mission, but it could justly be proud of this ministry. There were periods when the work lagged and it seemed that the ministry would have to be given up, but the long term results were very significant. The gospel had been taken into a remote, sparsely settled part of the county and new churches had been organized to provide spiritual guidance and nurture for the people. A number of churches currently a part of the French Broad were started through this Laurel mission: Big Laurel, Chapel Hill, Hopewell, Union Valley, Piney Grove, Walnut Creek, Upper Laurel, and Laurel Branch.

As the Association moved into the new century it also experienced significant improvements in its promotion of missions beyond the local field. This had been the slowest part of its program and for many years had been largely ignored by most of the churches. Association committees had urged support for State, Home, and Foreign missions but there had been little response. As late as 1899 only four churches gave anything to Foreign Missions, only five gave to Home Missions, and only eight gave to State Missions.

The first real break through came with the

organization of the Associational Women's Missionary Union. Women in a few churches had formed mission groups to study and support the work and they decided to carry the program further through an association wide organization. They met in 1905 and elected officers and initiated a simple program of giving. On September 1, 1906 they had their first annual conference. At the time there were only three local mission groups; one at Piney Mountain with 40 members, one at Mars Hill with 25 members, and one at Marshall with 20 members. As reported to the 1906 conference these three groups had given \$197.15 to missions that year, or \$114.84 more than all the churches in the Association had given in 1899.

The idea of Women-in-Action spread and women in other churches formed mission study groups. Gabriels Creek was added to the list in 1907. The women also began organizing youth groups for missions. In 1907 Mars Hill leaders set up a Young Woman's Auxiliary (YWA) and a Sunbeam Band for children. Marshall also organized a Sunbeam Band. That year the two Sunbeam Bands gave \$29.52 for missions. In time the Girl's Auxiliary (GA's) was added to the youth group and in 1925 the first Royal Ambassadors for boys was organized. Slowly other churches responded to this program and additional societies were formed. By 1920 Forks of Ivy, Laurel Branch, Long Branch, Little Ivy, Enon, Locust Grove, Madison Seminary, and Oak Ridge had mission societies. These societies gave a total of \$1,129.92 for missions that year.

For several years the WMU sent its annual reports to the Associational meetings, to be read by

some man. In 1921, however, Mrs. R. L. Moore, president of the Society, went to the annual meeting and for the first time read a report on women's work. That year they had given \$1,163.36 for mission causes. Before she sat down she urged all churches to have mission study classes and to become better informed on the work.

Association Minutes for 1924 expressed a very positive attitude toward the women's work. One statement reads: "This movement is the most promising feature in our mission work today and deserves the unqualified support and encouragement of all our churches and pastors." Over the next few years Miss Della Huggins, the Association's missionary working in the Laurel Area, helped organize eight Women's Unions and seven Sunbeam Bands in the Laurel churches. By 1927 there were 15 women's organizations and several youth groups in the French Broad.

It is interesting to note that mission offerings from churches throughout the Association began to increase dramatically following the organization of the WMU. In 1907, the year after the first annual report from the WMU, nine churches gave \$150.58 to State Missions, thirteen gave \$128.68 to Home Missions, and fifteen gave \$207.71 to Foreign Missions. In 1908 thirteen churches gave \$172.44 to State Missions, twelve gave \$200.79 to Home Missions, and thirteen gave \$250.68 for Foreign Missions. These were the largest mission offerings made to date.

In 1909 the delegates voted to raise \$600 to support one Home Missiohary for a year. They also authorized Roy Wall to take subscriptions for the

Foreign Mission Journal. The following year the delegates asked pastors to preach a sermon on Home Missions at least once a year and to form a club of subscribers to raise money toward the \$600 pledge. They called for mission rallies in all churches and appointed a committee to arrange for these. They also recommended a financial plan or schedule for special mission offerings: for State Missions, September, October, and November; for Foreign Missions, December, January, and February; for Home Missions, March, April, and May; for the Orphanage, July and August.

Offerings for mission causes continued to grow through the first two decades of the century. In 1913, for the first time, the Association exceeded its pledge to Foreign Missions and almost reached its goal for State Missions. Unfortunately, these gifts represented only a small number of the 27 churches with a membership of 2,754 persons. In 1929 only nine churches gave to the Cooperative Program and one church gave most of the amount given. Clearly, not all of the congregations had become faithful stewards of their money.

The Sunday School movement made greater progress than that experienced in mission work. In 1914 fifteen churches reported having Sunday Schools with 649 in average attendance. In 1928 thirty churches reported schools with an enrollment of 3,404. Twenty-one of the schools were graded: Beginners, 3-5 years; Primaries, 6-8 years; Juniors, 9-12 years; Intermediates, 13-16; Young People, 17-24 years; Adults, 25 and older. A lot of effort on the part of leaders and members alike had made these results possible.

Sunday School Conventions had been held each year to promote the work. The Association had urged pastors to promote the ministry, declaring that ignorance of the Scriptures was the greatest hindrance to Kingdom work. In 1912 the Association's Committee on Sabbath Schools recommended that Sunday Schools come under church control, that churches elect the superintendent and teachers, and that the pastors have full responsibility for this program just as they did for other church ministries. Until this time Sunday Schools had merely been "auxiliaries" to the church. They had paid their own expenses, elected their own officers and teachers, and carried on programs of giving quite apart from anything "the churches" did. Now, that would change and gradually the Bible Study on Sunday morning would become an intrinsic part of the total church program.

Other efforts were made to train workers for the Bible schools. In 1920 the first Baptist Mountain Assembly was held at Mars Hill College from July 27 through August 5. Courses were offered for Sunday School officers and teachers, and pastors. Only three churches in the Association sent representatives to this Assembly but attendance grew over the next few years. In 1930 churches were organized into five groups through which annual teacher training courses would be provided. Fifth Sunday meetings continued to be held on a regular basis and these were devoted to the promotion of Bible study on Sunday. Such programs along with the influence of a few strong leaders in the Association helped to sell the idea that there was a real

need for effective Bible teaching and that this could best be achieved through a system of well organized Sunday Schools. By the early 1930's most of the churches had added this ministry.

During this period the French Broad developed closer ties with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention and began to support more of their programs. Each year the Annual Session elected delegates (they were not yet called messengers) to both the State and Southwide conventions, and frequently received representatives from the two organizations to explain new programs. In 1918-1919 the State Convention launched a drive to raise \$1,000,000 for its educational institutions and the Association pledged its support. Concentration on ending World War I, and the influenza epidemics during the same years, however, hindered efforts to complete this campaign.

In May 1919 the Southern Baptist Convention initiated a five year Seventy-five Million Dollar Campaign to raise money for home and foreign missions, its seminaries, and most state projects, which included orphanages, hospitals, ministerial relief, and educational institutions. Moneys raised in this campaign were to be divided on a fifty-fifty basis between the state in which they were collected and the Southern Baptist Convention. The French Broad pledged \$45,000 toward this drive, and individual churches made pledges toward raising that amount. In 1920, the Association collected \$6,240.25 toward its pledge, and the WMS added \$734.86 to that sum. In 1923 churches contributed \$1,321.74, but after that gifts de-

clined. Unfortunately other associations and other states also failed to meet their pledges and the campaign fell short of its goal. The deadening impact of a farmers' depression, which began two years after the campaign was launched dried up the funds which leaders had counted on. In 1926-1927 the North Carolina State Convention initiated the Centennial Campaign to raise a million and a half dollars to pay off debts incurred in anticipation of receiving a full quota from the 75 Million Dollar Campaign. At its annual session in 1928 the Association recommended that the churches cooperate with the State Convention in raising \$25,000 on State Mission Day in October. Unfortunately, the Great Depression swallowed that effort before it really got started.

In 1925 the Southern Baptist Convention introduced a practical plan for raising money for all church ministries, the Cooperative Program. Charles E. Maddrey attended the French Broad that year to explain the plan. It was new and untried, so many members of the Association were reluctant to accept it. Only a few churches chose to cooperate. In 1925 only 11 churches gave through the program; in 1926 only seven contributed. The number of participating churches increased to 12 in 1927, but in 1928 the number fell to five.

Two new organizations were introduced during this period, the Baptist Young People's Union and the men's Brotherhood. According to the *Annual Report* of 1919 there were several BYPU's in local churches (none were identified) and in 1920 the Association passed a resolution urging congregations to establish Unions because these trained

members for service in the church. This ministry in church training, however, was viewed with suspicion. Many people believed the meetings would be nothing more than an opportunity for young people to get together and "court." They held that the organization only provided social gatherings and as such should have no place in the church. Of course, if the meetings had been nothing more than social gatherings, they would have provided a much needed service for young people, but the doubters failed to see the need for Christian fellowship for all church members, both young and old. They also failed to understand that the greatest need of the churches was the discipling of all members and the training of young people for future leadership.

Those who believed in the value of the Training program persisted and others were gradually led to accept the ministry. In 1927 an association wide BYPU Convention was held and efforts were initiated to encourage all churches to provide the program for their young people. When the Association met in late summer the delegates endorsed the new organization. For some time leaders had become aware of the need to teach Baptist doctrines and BYPU programs were designed to do that. In 1928 information on Training Unions was listed for the first time in Association Letters. At that time eight churches had Unions. It would be several years before many of the churches would introduce this ministry.

In 1922 the Madison County Baptist Brotherhood was organized and Dr. W. A. Sams was elected president. The stated purpose of this group

was to support "all things that Association stands for: Sunday Schools, B.Y.P.U., stewardship among laymen and civic righteousness." No further information about this organization was given in the Annual Reports.

During the 75 Million Dollar Campaign the State Baptist Convention initiated steps to build a Baptist Hospital. This institution would be a Class A hospital open to patients without regards to church affiliation but would be a special facility for North Carolina Baptists. It would also accept patients without regard to their ability to pay. Churches would be asked to contribute funds to cover the charity patients. In 1925 three churches in the French Broad gave \$129.52 for this purpose. In 1928 the Association designated Mothers' Day as a time for collecting a special Hospital Offering.

In 1919 the French Broad added another special offering to its yearly schedule, that of a Thanksgiving Offering for the Children's Home. For years the orphanage had been one of the best supported agencies sponsored by the denomination. In addition to the regular church offering for the children, the Sunday Schools had set aside their "collections" on one Sunday each month for this purpose. In 1926 these Schools gave \$2467.84. As the Children's Home had been forced to build larger facilities and expand programs to meet the growing need for child care, its need for greater financial support had likewise increased. To meet the greater expenses the State Convention asked churches to designate Thanksgiving as a time for a very special offering. Churches could give cash as well as in kind donations of food, clothing, bedding, or other

materials which the orphanage could use. The Association approved this request and in 1928 eighteen of the French Broad churches gave \$1004.32. Donations of food and other in kind contributions were sent on a fairly regular schedule.

In all of the programs thus far discussed the Association as an organized body played a significant role in leadership. It was usually well ahead of the local churches in its dreams and plans for Kingdom work. Through the years it made repeated efforts to improve the ministry. Committees on the State of the Ministry and the State of the Churches were frank, brutally so at times, in calling attention to weaknesses in the churches and in calling for committed and educated preachers. In 1909 the Committee on the State of the Churches recommended that pastors meet once or twice a year to talk about their work. In August 1915 a pastors' conference was held for two days, and the meeting was so successful that the participants decided to meet on a regular schedule. The Association helped a number of young ministers to attend Mars Hill College. It also helped some of the weak congregations with pastor's salaries and with funds to build adequate church houses. In 1923 it took positive action in asking churches to win back those who had strayed or been excluded. This was the first recorded stand against exclusion as a proper way for controlling human behavior and the approval of more redemptive measures. Fifth Sunday meetings held in four convenient locations were organized to create more interest in church activities, to promote the Sunday Schools and the

Training program, and to create a unity of fellowship among the widely dispersed churches.

At times the Association had to deal with controversies over church doctrines, also with disputes in local congregations. Early in the Twenties the new theory of Evolution stirred bitter debates throughout the state. This new theory seemed to challenge the Biblical story of creation and the controversy raged from pulpit to legislative halls in the state capital. In 1922 the Association passed a resolution declaring "faith in the Bible as the word of God from Genesis to Revelation" and denouncing the claims of Evolution as heretical.

Most of the local churches in the French Broad were carrying on their work in a spirit of unity and good fellowship, but a few congregations experienced conflict and disruptive disputes. Big Laurel Seminary and Union Valley had problems with their pastors. In 1910 both churches had men serving them who had been excluded from other churches and had continued to preach as "independents." At its annual session the Association passed a resolution recommending that both churches secure other leaders. Later reports indicate that they followed the recommendation. In 1920 the Walnut church excluded its pastor, the Reverend Shuford Jenkins. In August, when the Association met, the delegates appointed a council to investigate the matter, and the council found Walnut's action unjustified. On hearing this report the Association asked the church to rescind its action, which it did. In 1923 the Annual Session appointed a committee to investigate the Bethel congregation "with reference to its soundness of

faith." It had been reported that some of the members had accepted the doctrines of Russellism. Apparently the charges were unfounded and the whole matter was cleared up. During this same time Grape Vine Church found itself in difficulty with two men each claiming to be the rightful pastor. The Association advised both men to resign and that the church call a new pastor.

In a summary view of the period between 1900 and 1930, the Association had increased from 28 churches with a membership of 2763 to 38 churches with a membership of 4474. Properties of the churches had increased greatly as one congregation after another erected new buildings or expanded older facilities. In 1927 there was one change made in procedures at the annual meetings. Instead of having all the *Letters* read, one person gave a Digest of the letters. Dr. R. L. Moore did that in 1927; the next year a committee was appointed to prepare the Digest. The most important action affecting the structure and policies of the Association was the adoption of a new constitution in 1920.

This new constitution was a short document describing the organization and the functioning of the body in very simple terms. Three articles are of special significance. Article IV reasserted that the Association was only an advisory body which had no power to interfere in the internal affairs of any church. However, it went further to say that "the Association may refuse to receive delegates of any church, the faith and practice of which is not in accordance with that of the Missionary Baptist Church and the Association may withdraw fellow-

ship from such a church until it reforms its action, both in faith and practice." Article V provided a new ruling on delegations sent to Annual Sessions. It stated that each church would be entitled to three delegates and one additional person for every twenty-five members in excess of fifty, provided all ordained ministers, officers of the Association, members of the Executive Committee, and chairmen of committees be sent as delegates *ex officio*. Article VIII established an executive committee of five members (to be appointed at each annual session) which would have the authority to supervise the work of the Association and transact incidental business between annual sessions.

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Years of Depression and War

*D*uring the fifteen year period between 1930 and 1945 the nation underwent the trauma of depression and war. The Great Depression of the thirties and the Second World War of the early forties left lasting marks on the social structure of American Society as well as the economic and political systems of the nation. Inevitably, the French Broad Association was to feel the impact from these experiences in one way or another. The effects of the Depression were revealed in a decline in giving for two years, but the New Deal programs which created jobs and greater prosperity for the farmers soon brought increase in personal giving. The War had more visible and lasting effects. Many young men were called for military service and some saw active duty on the European and Asian battle fronts. Other young men, and families, went to work in ship yards or defense factories. Although

few if any took their church letters with them, they left vacancies in places of local leadership. Furthermore, many of these families found work in other industries after the War and never returned. This was a big loss to smaller churches.

In 1942, as the United States became actively involved in the War, tires for cars and trucks became scarce and gasoline was rationed. These shortages made travel more difficult. To minimize the effects on its activities the Association ruled that annual sessions, as well as meetings of auxiliary units, be held in places where buses and other public travel facilities might be used by messengers and by representatives from denominational agencies. In 1943 the messengers voted to have one-day annual sessions beginning in 1945, but this decision was rescinded in 1944.

The Association supported the work of the Red Cross as it ministered to troops on the War fronts and other victims of the War, also War Relief efforts undertaken by the federal government. However, as an organization the French Broad tried to avoid any involvement in the war efforts. In 1942 the messengers passed a resolution asking that no churches be used as recruiting stations or for the sale of war bonds or stamps, or for inciting hatred for "the enemy." In 1943 the Annual Session expressed concern over the moral effects of war on American society. As an expression of this concern the group passed the following resolution:

Realizing that a moral breakdown accompanies every war, we resolve that our churches do everything possible by God's

help to curb the breakdown that has already manifested itself so greatly in our midst during this present war. Many of these immoralities are making inroads into our churches; namely: drink.

We further resolve that our churches put forth a greater effort than heretofore to protect our womanhood in the great crisis of today. One has only to open his eyes and see the peril that lies ahead unless the church comes to their rescue.

The most significant effect of the War Years, however, was the greatly improved economic conditions throughout the state and nation. On top of the economic revival initiated by the New Deal program, the large government outlays for defense and for winning the two-area War, as well as furnishing supplies and equipment for the European Allies, gave employment for thousands and created a period of "prosperity not known before in the United States." This made more money available for the churches as annual contributions clearly revealed.

Despite the disruptions of changes experienced during the period there was good solid progress in all phases of Association work, slow at times but always moving in a forward direction. Seven churches were added to its membership: Little Creek, Corn's Chapel, Mt. Sheba, Oak Hill, Oak Grove, Arrington Branch, and Calvary. In 1945 there were 44 churches with a membership of 6720. All forty-four had Sunday Schools with a total enrollment of 2214. Nine churches reported

Daily Vacation Bible Schools with 408 children enrolled. Nine had Baptist Training Unions with 619 members. Eight churches had WMU organizations, and more than a third of the forty-four had mid-week prayer services. Twenty-four churches had elected music directors in 1945. Many congregations had erected new church houses or expanded older facilities. In 1945 the Annual Report listed the value of church properties, including two parsonages, as \$181,024.

A few changes were made in the structure and policy of the Association during these years. In 1937, by ruling of the assembled body, the term "delegates" was changed to "messengers". In 1939 the "messengers" set the Association Year to run from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

In August 1945 the messengers adopted a new constitution. It was a very simple document and made few changes in association organization or policy. The most significant change was the adding of "Missionary" to the name of the Association—French Broad Missionary Baptist Association. That same year a committee on grievances in the churches was added to the standing committees. This action, no doubt, was in response to the need to find a more satisfactory way for dealing with local conflicts.

Throughout the period, the Association leadership attempted to promote good fellowship among and within the churches through pastors' conferences and other special meetings. On the whole it was successful, but there were a few ugly episodes that marred the picture. In 1934 the Reverend Jesse W. Corn was asked to appear before the

Executive Committee to answer charges that he was trying to lead member congregations to leave the Association and become independent churches. At the same time a report to the Association stated that some other ministers were not supporting programs of the Southern Baptist Convention which the French Broad had endorsed. This was causing confusion in the churches and had caused some congregations to split into bitter factions. In response to these charges the Association called for reconciliation and pastors were urged to iron out their misunderstandings in the monthly pastors' conferences.

In 1932 a bitter dispute split Bull Creek Church into warring factions. When the Association met in August both groups presented Letters and asked to be seated. A committee from the Association had been sent to the church two months earlier and had worked out what they thought was a compromise acceptable to both sides. After the Committee left, however, the revolting faction rejected the plan and came to the Annual session claiming to be the legitimate delegation from Bull Creek. A new Committee reviewed the situation and found the new faction at fault. The regular Bull Creek messengers were seated. Such disputes gave the Committee on grievances some very difficult problems to solve.

On occasions the French Broad took strong stands on public issues and policies. Temperance was one of these issues. It has supported the cause of temperance for many years before the State or the Federal government had acted on the matter, and the Annual Session endorsed the 18th Amendment when it was passed. As Prohibition under the

18th Amendment failed to eliminate the sale and use of intoxicating beverages the Association gave its support to the United Dry Forces. In 1944 it approved a report strongly condemning the use of sugar by distilleries while it was being strictly rationed for American people. The Report called for a restoration of Prohibition.

In 1968 the messengers registered a strong protest against "a rotten political alliance between politicians and our public school system in Madison County." They declared that the schools ought to be free from "any and all political interference."

One of the most significant steps taken by the Association during these years was the adoption of a new approach to giving, that of an emphasis on Christian Stewardship. In 1937 a Stewardship Committee was appointed to promote giving on a regular basis through the Cooperative Program and in special offerings for missions and benevolence: schools and colleges, the Children's Home, the Hospital, and Old Ministers' Relief. In 1939 the messengers to the Annual Session passed a resolution calling for week long training sessions for the study of stewardship. The resolution also emphasized the need to cooperate with the Baptist State Convention in conducting Stewardship Revivals.

The Association took other steps to promote giving to causes beyond the local church. Beginning in 1938 a missionary sermon was included in the program for all annual sessions. The Reverend John McLeod preached the first sermon that year. Perry Morgan and M. A. Huggins were given time on annual programs to explain the Cooperative

Program and urge its support. Representatives from most of the State and Southwide agencies and organizations visited annual meetings and were allotted time to present their programs. Certainly, the messengers received plenty of information, and inspiration, which they could carry back to their local congregations.

Their efforts had some positive results. Whereas in 1931 the Association gave \$4,045.17 to missions and \$12,205.86 for local expenses, and ten churches in the Association gave nothing to any mission cause, in 1945 the forty-four gave \$14,274.90 to missions and benevolence, and \$34,866.13 for local expenses, including pastors' salaries and building funds. The weakest point remained the number giving through the Cooperative Program. The number fluctuated from year to year; in 1936 eighteen gave through the Program but only six did so in 1945. The Orphanage remained the most generously supported agency throughout the period.

By 1939 the Association had come to the decision that it needed executive leadership. The messengers passed a resolution saying that "in view of the need of an association missionary this session elect Rev. M. E. Hensley for this service." It further directed that W. L. Lynch, J. C. Pipes, D. K. Cohn, and Joe Eads be appointed as a committee to confer with the State Board as to what aid it could give in paying him. A satisfactory agreement was reached and Hensley began his service as Association Missionary. In 1943, Hensley resigned and the Association again appealed to the State Board for assistance with a Field Worker. At a called

meeting on November 29, the messengers accepted a plan offered by the Baptist State Convention to employ a Field Worker jointly with Yancey Association. The French Broad and Yancey Association would each contribute \$300 toward the salary and the State Mission Board would double the amount. Under this arrangement Miss Laura Mae Hilliard came to work on June 1, 1943. In 1944, however, Miss Hilliard resigned to work full time in Yancey and a committee was appointed to secure another Field Worker. M. H. Kendall, Mrs. R. L. Moore, and Mrs. C. N. Corn composed the committee. The Committee was instructed to find a worker who was a native of the French Broad. Meanwhile, the Reverend Jack Buckner was appointed to serve as Association worker on a half time basis.

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A New Beginning

*D*r. R. L. Moore died in December 1949 and Mrs. Moore in February 1950. Their going represented the passing of an era for the French Broad. For more than 50 years they had been active and dedicated participants in all association ministries. Dr. Moore had served as clerk, Fifth Sunday leader, historian, and moderator (for three terms). He had organized Chautauqua Conferences and Mountain Assemblies at Mars Hill College to train church leaders. Mrs. Moore helped organize the Associational WMU and served as its president for 30 years. She was the first woman to go before an Annual Session to report on Women's Work and to plead for a commitment to missions. The Moores' deaths symbolized the passing of a generation of faithful workers. By the natural law of life expectancy leadership changes every twenty-five to thirty years-the old pass and a new generation emerges

to assume their places. This occurred in the French Broad during the late forties and early fifties.

The Reverend David Roberts represented the coming of a new generation of leadership. In August 1946 the Committee on Securing a Field Worker recommended the calling of David Roberts for that position, and a new era in association history began. Nineteen hundred and forty-six was not only a time of new beginnings in the French Broad; it was a time of new beginnings in the nation. The American people had survived the Great Depression and had emerged victorious from a two-front war that had seriously threatened everything they believed in, including freedom and democracy. It was an exciting time, a period of peace and prosperity. New public officials were replacing the war time leaders and new visions for the future were replacing old dreams. It was to be a significant period for the French Broad Association.

Roberts came to the Association from Tuckaseige Baptist Church at Mount Holly (Gaston Association). An arrangement was worked out with the State Board whereby he would serve half time with the Association and half time as pastor of the Bull Creek Church. The two would contribute equally toward his salary of \$1000; the State Board would double their contributions. The Robertses moved into the Bull Creek parsonage and lived there until their new home was completed in 1955. In 1948 the messengers to the Annual Session voted to elect Roberts for an indefinite time rather than the usual one or two year term. In 1954 they voted to call him to full time ministry with the Association and he gave up the pastorate at Bull Creek.

Once they were settled into the Bull Creek parsonage the Robertses threw themselves into their new work. The Field Worker's Report for 1954 is an example of the many activities which they pursued year after year. The Report reads:

Churches visited	— 56
Visits to churches	— 283
Sermons preached	— 128
Other talks	— 105
Study courses taught	— 29
S. S. lessons taught	— 25
State meetings attended	— 11
Association meetings attended	— 26
Homes visited	— 263
Individual conferences	— 1,391
Group conferences	— 145
No. of churches in BTU	
Enlargement	— 8
No. of churches in Stewardship	
Revivals	— 14
Conversions	— 39
No. of churches instructed on	
budgets	— 7
Bibles and Testaments	
distributed	— 169
No. of DVBS	
VBS enrollment	— 2,002
VBS mission gifts	— \$229.20

This listing of activities is only an outline of the work carried on by the Rev. and Mrs. Roberts. The full picture emerges from the story of what was taking place in Association ministries.

Rev. Robert's first interest was work with children; he believed the future of the church lay with them. He had taught school for a few years and he knew children could be taught. Daily Vacation Bible Schools, then, became a major project. Laura Mae Hilliard and others had introduced the program but Rev. and Mrs. Roberts carried it into all the churches. Each year as public schools closed, they began scheduling Bible Schools, going from one church to another, throughout the summer months. For years they did all of the work by themselves, sometimes directing and teaching three schools a day. Gradually, however, parents, who came with their children to see what kind of "school" it was going to be, became interested and volunteered to help. To train these assistants the Robertses held VBS clinics each spring. On at least one occasion they sponsored a DVBS parade in Marshall to stir interest. Twenty-three churches entered floats in the parade. The result of their tireless efforts was a marked increase in the number of churches participating and in the enrollments in all the schools.

In 1946, the year before the Robertses came to work, there were nine schools with 460 children enrolled. The polio epidemic and scare of 1948-49 caused parents to keep their children at home, but in 1950 there were 26 schools and 1568 enrolled. In 1961 the Robertses reached their goal of a school in every church. (See a full account of this ministry at the end of this chapter.)

Rev. Roberts also gave his full support to the teaching ministry of the churches and Sunday Schools flourished during the fifties and early

sixties. Under the able leadership of Wade Huey (1953 - 1957) and Rex Allen (1958 - 1962), Association Sunday School superintendents, and many dedicated local leaders, enrollments reached an all time high between 1955 and 1958. In the late thirties and early forties schools in the French Broad had suffered a loss of almost 700 members. Some of these losses, no doubt, were due to the out migration of young families to work in defense industries and automobile factories in northern cities. By the 1950's, however, population of the area had become stabilized and church and Sunday School rolls began to show steady growth.

During these years Sunday School leaders placed major emphases on enlargement and teacher training. In 1951 twenty-one of the churches participated in an Enlargement Campaign directed by L. L. Morgan from the Sunday School Board. In 1953 Paul Tugman, the Association Sunday School Superintendent, led in a campaign under the slogan: "A million more in '54". This was in cooperation with a south wide effort. Representatives from seventeen churches attended an opening rally and agreed to launch efforts to increase enrollments by twenty percent during the year. By the end of '54 eleven churches had achieved this number and more, but the Association as a whole fell short of the goal. The campaign was not a failure, however, because many churches that failed to reach the goal had become interested and were actively working to bring more people into the Sunday Bible studies. By 1957 there were 6,226 enrolled in Sunday Schools of the 48 churches, with an average attendance of 3,511. In 1958 there was an

enrollment of 6,035 with an average attendance of 3,889. These figures represented an increase of 2,149 since 1945.

Better trained teachers played a significant role in this growth. During the fifties there was a major drive to provide training for all teachers and workers. In 1954 the first Association wide training school was held; twelve churches took part with 121 adults attending. Approximately 370 teachers earned certificates during the year. In 1956 the third week in September was designated as study course week in local churches. In March and the first week in April in 1957 study courses were held in four locations: Madison Seminary, Beech Glen, Upper Laurel, and Big Laurel. Some forty churches were represented in these study groups. In June an Association wide "Workers' Council" was held at the Mars Hill Church and all departments of church work were invited to attend: Sunday School, Training Union, WMU, and Brotherhood. More and more individual churches began having weekly Teachers' meetings and regular study courses.

One of the outgrowths of the training programs was the movement to reorganize Sunday School classes according to age groups. The larger churches moved to organize age groups into departments: beginners, primaries, juniors, intermediates, young people, and adults. Two new departments were added in some churches; Cradle Roll Department and Extension Department. Meanwhile churches began adding new classrooms and improving their facilities to take care of the growing Schools.

The church training ministry also enjoyed an all

time high during this twenty year period. As had been true with Sunday Schools, Training Unions had suffered a decline in enrollment during the late thirties and early forties. In 1935 there were ten unions, but in 1945 there were only nine. With the support of the Rev. Roberts this trend changed. By 1957, under the leadership of Irene Olive and Mrs. Paul Tugman, Training Union directors, the number of unions had grown to twenty-three, with an enrollment of 1950 — the high mark to date.

An active and constructive program of work brought this growth. Beginning in 1951 three major association wide Training Union meetings were held each year. Early in December "M" Night, or "Mobilization Night", set the stage for a year of activities; in the spring, Training Union Tournaments were held; and in July a promotional meeting sought to build new strength for the remainder of the year.

In 1953 three hundred and seven persons representing fifteen churches attended "M" Night. During the spring of '54 two hundred and eighty-three persons, representing fourteen churches, attended the Training Union Tournaments. Penny Crayton of Enon Church won the Junior Memory Work Tournament and went on to be a State Winner. Pansy Mae Robinson of Paint Gap Church won the Intermediate Sword Drill Tournament and went on to win third place in the Regional Contest. Jim Buckner of the California Creek Church won the Adult Scripture Reading Tournament. In 1957 Penny Crayton again won first place in local and regional contests and became the first person to win the State Tournament for four years in succes-

sion. In 1966 six juniors went on to the State Contest in Memory Work Drills.

In July, 1954 Miss Olive led a week-long Enlargement Campaign. Eight churches participated: Bull Creek, Calvary, Forks of Ivy, Mars Hill, Marshall, Paint Fork, Piney Mountain, and Walnut. Fifteen State workers assisted with the campaign. As a climax to the week's program, a worship service was held at the Mars Hill Church with 448 persons attending. Mrs. Winnie Rickett Pearce, one of the most popular state training workers, was the speaker for the evening. The meeting was concluded with a fellowship hour and a water-melon slicing on the athletic field at Mars Hill College.

In addition to the association wide meetings the leaders encouraged individual churches to provide study courses for their people. They also recommended that local churches observe Youth Week each spring. This idea gained acceptance and by 1963 ten churches reported having had such a program.

By the mid-sixties, however, the Training Union ministry was beginning to reflect the changes occurring in American Society. Greater prosperity in the post-war years had given people automobiles which could carry them to church—or carry them away from church. Families chose Sundays, especially Sunday afternoons, to visit relatives or friends, or to go to some vacation spot, and the Sunday evening services were the first to suffer. Between 1945 and 1955 there had been an 133 percent increase in Training Union enrollment, but between 1955 and 1965 there was a 37 percent

decrease. It was not just in the French Broad; all areas of the state and southland were having the same experience. State and south wide leaders conducted studies to find the nature of the problem and to provide new materials and organizational structures, hoping these would help. They even experimented with schedules other than the traditional 6:30 to 7:30 hour. None of these innovations proved to be very successful, however, and the Church Training ministry became the first victim of the Social Revolution of the 1960's.

In 1950, Mrs. Locke Robinson succeeded Mrs. R. L. Moore as Association Superintendent of the Woman's Missionary Union. She and a dedicated corps of workers organized women and children for missions in more than a third of the local churches. In 1948 ten churches had WMU groups with a membership of 733 persons; in 1968 eighteen churches had 144 organized units, including WMS, YWA, GA, and Sunbeam bands, with a total membership of 1,212. The women were also faithful in providing financial support. In 1960, for an example, they gave \$3,917.50 to the Lottie Moon Foreign Mission Offering, \$1,627.29 to the Annie Armstrong Home Mission Offering, \$400 to the Heck-Jones Offering, \$455.17 to State Missions, and \$1000 toward the salary of Mrs. Robert Goldie, their missionary in Ghana. They also gave \$906.60 to Ministerial Relief, \$35 to Christian Education for foreign students, and \$35 for Association Bible School materials.

Through their emphasis on tithing and financial support for missions the women's organizations had a significant impact on the churches and

their stewardship responsibilities. In 1960, they gave a total of \$296,146.00 with \$28,619.00 going to missions (only one church failed to give to missions that year). Annual reports throughout the period reflected increases in gifts for local expenditures as well as gifts to missions and other benevolent causes. With strong encouragement from Rev. Roberts thirty churches gave through the Cooperative Program in 1960; in 1966 all 48 made a contribution through the program.

Churches in the Association contributed generously to a number of special State projects. They were strong in their support of the Baptist Children's Homes and more families in the French Broad served as foster parents for children from the Homes than in any other association. The French Broad took an active role in promoting the movement to establish a Home in Western North Carolina—in 1962 work on this Home was started. The Association also faithfully supported the Baptist Hospital. For fifteen years, 1954-1969, all 48 churches contributed to its support, giving two percent more than the statewide average. A number also supported the Homes for the Aging. In 1948 the Association pledged \$8,400 toward the cost of relocating Wake Forest College in Winston-Salem.

The worst sag in stewardship was in gifts for the Association. Contributions were never generous and often fell short of amounts needed to cover day by day expenses. The Association budget was always small, and State funds helped pay the Missionary's salary, but many months ended with no funds to cover unpaid bills. The budget of 1961 is typical of those for the entire period.

Missionary's salary	\$3,000
Rent allowance	480
Travel	600
Annuity	360
Office expense	450
Utilities	275
Missionary home building fund	600
Visual education	100
Sunday School	100
Training Union	100
Brotherhood	100
W. M. U	100
V. B. S.	100
Music	100
Missionary convention expenses	300
Minutes	425
Association clerk	50
Miscellaneous	195
 Total	 \$8,035

Amount to be paid by the Association \$6,235
The remainder to come from the State

The fact that 48 churches often failed to raise the money to cover that kind of a budget would indicate that many of them did not understand or appreciate the importance of the Associational organization and its work.

Mr. Roberts made special efforts to teach all the churches how to manage their finances. He met with leaders and explained the value of setting up budgets. In 1950 Enon Church was the first to follow his advice. The next year the Annual session recommended that all churches consider instituting such a plan. Meanwhile, Mr. Roberts continued

his counseling with individual groups and teaching them how to organize budgets. In 1960 he invited state workers to come to the French Broad and hold a clinic on the "Forward Program of Church Finance." He also worked hard to persuade churches to provide Annuity for their pastors. The average salary for pastors in 1954 was \$800 a year. This forced most of the ministers to find other jobs to cover living expenses, and, of course, there was little left for retirement years. The Annuity would help with this problem. The Association contributed to an Annuity for Roberts.

Of all the continuing programs sponsored by the Association, the Brotherhood was the least successful if one judges by the number of men involved. This organization never found the support that the WMU did. A number of men, including Theodore Robinson and Gordon Ball, worked faithfully to keep it alive, but few men joined them. In 1954 there were three units, at Beech Glen, Madison Seminary, and Marshall, with a membership of 38. In 1960 eight churches had a total of 126 enrolled in organizations for men and boys (RA's). After that date the Brotherhood suffered the same decline that other church ministries experienced.

A number of new ministries were introduced during this period: a music program, a library program, and a Seminary Extension program. In January 1957 an Association wide music school was held and a music program was initiated. Mrs. Charles Carter was elected as the first Associational Music Director and Mrs. David Roberts was chosen as director of children's choirs. Mrs. Robert Seymour, of the Music Department at Mars Hill

College, volunteered to help pianists and organists. Two association hymn sings were held later that year. The new workers were available to help all the churches to plan and improve their music as a valuable part of the worship services. Annual Christmas Carol Sings were among the most popular features of the program. Annual reports for the Association began listing choir directors, pianists, and organists of the churches.

In 1962 a Church Library Council was appointed, with Daisy Anderson as its chairman. Miss Anderson and council members began working with individual churches to encourage them to set up libraries and make additional materials available for Sunday School teachers and other church workers. By 1965 thirteen churches had libraries. In 1966 the council began a "traveling library" which could be taken from one church to another on a schedule of three months at each.

Perhaps the most important new ministry was the Seminary Extension Program of Studies. This was a ministry to which Mr. Roberts gave his full support and he must be given credit for its early success. In 1966 two courses were offered at California Creek Church. Sue Fitzgerald and M. H. Kendall were the teachers. One hundred and fifty adults attended, a record for that year in the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1967, one hundred and seven enrolled in the studies. This program has been continued through the years with a greater number of courses being offered year by year.

Evangelism has primarily been the responsibility of the local churches, but during this period the

Association began to take a more active role in this ministry. In 1950 an evangelism committee was appointed with Rev. E. J. Jenkins as chairman. The messengers also voted to cooperate with the South-wide Evangelism Efforts from March 25 through April 8 in 1951. In 1966 the annual session voted to cooperate with the Baptist Jubilee Revival Plan. Each church would hold a revival during the period, March 28 to April 12, 1967; forty-two churches cooperated. In 1967 Rev. Gordon Ball assumed leadership of the Evangelism Committee. That year thirty-four churches held revivals. In 1969 the Committee sponsored an association wide revival in April; twenty churches cooperated.

During this period a number of changes were made which affected the Association and its leadership. The Constitution was rewritten twice, once in 1947 and again in 1956. There were only a few changes in the first document but the second gave in detail the purpose and the rules on membership, officers, and committees. The duties of all standing committees were listed and two new committees were added: Promotion Committee and Steering Committee (See Appendix for copies of this document.) In 1947 it was decided that the Nominating Committee would report nominations for all Association offices, including those for the WMU, the Training Union, and Sunday School. The same year the messengers voted to hold annual meetings in two sessions, each in a different church. It had become too burdensome for the women in one church to feed the gathering twice. In 1956 the session voted to meet at three separate churches,

one on Wednesday evening, again, on Thursday evening, and for a third session on Friday. This was changed again in 1964, when they decided to meet only twice, once on Thursday evening and again on Friday. In 1964, as Rev. Roberts' health declined, the Association elected Mrs. Roberts as his official assistant—of course, she had been that informally from the beginning.

In August 1969 the Reverend Roberts preached his last sermon as Association Missionary. At the time he was made Missionary Emeritus and Mrs. Roberts was chosen to serve in his place on an interim basis until a new leader could be found. He had served with dedication and much personal sacrifice for twenty-three years. In his report as historian that year, John McLeod reviewed the accomplishments of those years. In 1946, the year Roberts came to the French Broad, 39 of the 48 churches met in one-room buildings; 20 had no musical instruments; only two had homes for their pastors, and none provided pastor's studies. Since 1946, 26 churches had erected new buildings and 48 had renovated older structures. only four one-room church houses remained and one of those congregations had building plans underway. Nine new parsonages had been built. All church grounds had been landscaped and needed facilities added.

The number of WMU organizations had grown from 11 to 19; the number of Training Unions from five to 24; only a scattered few DVBS's to one in every church.

Roberts assisted many churches with budgets suitable to their needs; few had any financial plans when he came. Before his retirement he had led all

the churches to contribute through the Cooperative Program. For three years he, along with other association leaders, had held successful Seminary Extension classes. The first had an enrollment larger than any in the Southern Baptist Convention. And, on top of all his many duties, he found time for counseling and for preaching in many of the churches.

**FRENCH BROAD
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS
1941 - 1991**

Mrs. David Roberts Taylor

In the year 1940 no schools were reported. However, in 1941, there were 4 schools with 161 enrolled. The first four churches in the association to have Bible Schools were Bull Creek, Forks of Ivy, Gabriel's Creek, and Mars Hill. These Bible Schools were under the direction of Rev. Matt Hensley.

In 1943-1944 there were eleven schools reported with an enrollment of 375 under the direction of Miss Laura Mae Hillard who served as half-time Associational missionary. In 1945 there were 9 schools with 408 and 1946 saw 9 schools reported with 461 enrolled under the direction of Rev. J. J. Buckner.

In 1948-1949 there was a polio epidemic and the scare caused enrollment to drop for a time. In 1950 however there were 26 schools with 1568 enrolled. 1955 saw 34 schools with 2209 enrolled.

1960 reported 37 schools with 2286 enrolled. In the years 1961-1962 there were 49 schools - one in every church in the association with an enrollment of 2686. 1965 reported 47 schools with 2819 enrolled. All these were under the leadership of Rev. David Roberts.

In 1970 there were 31 schools with 1896 enrolled. In 1975 there were 42 schools with 2570 enrolled. 1980 saw 39 schools with 2186 enrolled. These schools were under the direction of Rev. E. J. Jenkins.

1985 reported 39 schools with 2198 enrolled under the direction of Rev. Dale Fisher.

1990 had 38 schools with 2646 enrolled and 1 mission with 216 enrolled under the direction of Rev. Joe Edwards.

1991 had 39 schools with an enrollment of 2406 and 1 mission with 10 enrolled under the direction of Rev. Troy Rogers.

**FRENCH BROAD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS
1940 - 1991**

YEAR	# OF SCHOOLS	ENROLLMENT	MISSION SCH.	DIRECTOR
1940	0	0	0	Matt Hensley
1941	4	161	0	Matt Hensley
1942	5	372	0	Matt Hensley
1943	11	365	0	Laura Mae Hillard
1944	11	379	0	Laura Mae Hillard
1945	9	408	0	J.J. Buckner
1946	9	461	0	Mr. Plemmons
1947	30	1368	0	David Roberts
1948	29	1565	0	David Roberts
* 1949	20	1047	0	David Roberts
1950	26	1568	0	David Roberts
1951	26	1568	0	David Roberts
1952	29	1851	0	David Roberts
1953	27	1738	0	David Roberts
1954	31	1823	0	David Roberts
1955	34	2209	0	David Roberts
1956	36	2189	0	David Roberts
1957	34	2121	0	David Roberts
1958	38	2033	0	David Roberts
1959	41	2280	0	David Roberts
1960	37	2313	0	David Roberts
1961	49	2686	0	David Roberts
+1962	49	2911	0	David Roberts
1963	47	2855	0	David Roberts
1964	44	2604	0	David Roberts
1965	47	2819	0	David Roberts
1966	46	2708	0	David Roberts
1967	46	2494	0	David Roberts
1968	46	2325	0	David Roberts
1969	41	2160	0	Mrs. David Roberts
1970	31	1896	0	E. J. Jenkins

1971	31	1797	0	E. J. Jenkins
1972	37	2084	0	E. J. Jenkins
1973	36	1986	0	E. J. Jenkins
1974	38	1996	0	E. J. Jenkins
1975	42	2570	0	E. J. Jenkins
1976	39	2557	0	E. J. Jenkins
1977	40	2373	0	E. J. Jenkins
1978	39	2214	0	E. J. Jenkins
1979	?	?	0	E. J. Jenkins
1980	39	2186	0	E. J. Jenkins
1981	39	?	0	E. J. Jenkins
1982	39	2507	0	E. J. Jenkins
1983	?	?	0	?
1984	43	1371	0	Dale Fisher
++1985	39	2198	2 (24 enrolled)	Dale Fisher
1986	37	2460	0	Joe Edwards
1987	39	2559	0	Joe Edwards
**1988	37	2389	2 (28 enrolled)	Joe Edwards
1989	32	2449	1 (216 enrolled)	Joe Edwards
1990	38	2646	1 (216 enrolled)	Joe Edwards
1991	39	2406	1 (10 enrolled)	Troy Rogers

Notes:

* Polio scare in 1948-49 caused a decline in enrollment.

+ The year 1961 saw Vacation Bible Schools in 100% of churches in association.

++Oak Hill and Rice Creek each reported mission schools.

**The two reported mission schools were back yard Bible studies.

❧ 8 ☙

Extending the Boundaries

*A*t a special meeting of the Association on October 12, 1969 the messengers voted to call the Reverend E. J. Jenkins to fill the vacancy left when David Roberts resigned. Jenkins was and is a man of tireless energy and his term of service in the French Broad reflected his active nature.

Soon after taking office he initiated an outreach program reminiscent of the Laurel Ministry of earlier years. In the summer of 1970 he led the Association in sponsoring a Good News Center at Spillcorn with Nancy Knight as the director. During the first year she conducted Vacation Bible School for 63 children, led 14 teenagers in Bible study, and taught 56 adult women in sewing classes. In addition to these programs she planned social activities for the different age groups. The summer program was offered again in 1971, and in 1972 the ministry was expanded to include a

worship service each Sunday afternoon and a prayer service on Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, repairs were made to the house in which Miss Knight lived and a 1962 Ford Van was purchased for her use in the work. The Baptist State Convention gave financial assistance and interested individuals in the county made contributions to help with the expenses. The ministry was cut short in 1973 and was not renewed in 1974 due to conditions beyond local control. Jenkins had hoped to establish full time work in the area, including a kindergarten program, clubs for boys and girls, and special leadership for the young men, also to lead the community in building a new church house as a center for the ministry. Unfortunately, he was unable to achieve these goals.

At the same time that the Association was involved in the Spillcorn Summer Program, it assumed leadership of the Belva Baptist Mission. For a number of years there had been a community Sunday School in the area and in more recent years the Grassy Branch Baptist Church in the Buncombe Association had sponsored a mission there. The Reverend V. A. Brown of Swannanoa served as its pastor until he resigned on June 1, 1971; Jenkins supplied until the group elected a new pastor. At the time, attendance at morning worship services ranged from twenty to forty or a few more. And the number of potential members was growing as more and more people moved into the region. There was definite need for a church and a full time ministry.

In January 1972 Gordon Ball was elected pastor of the Mission and on July 23 the Mission was

reconstituted as a Missionary Baptist Church. When the Association met in August the new church was received into the French Broad. The Baptist State Convention agreed to give financial assistance until the church could become self-supporting and in 1974 the French Broad voted to contribute \$2,100 toward its building expenses. Within a few months the congregation began gathering materials and money for the construction of a beautiful church house.

In its letter to the Association in 1974 the Belva Church reported a membership of 32, an average Sunday School attendance of 40, and total tithes and offerings of \$8,131, with \$721 of that assigned to missions. The Congregation spent \$4,804 that year toward construction of the new building. Of course, many materials had been donated and volunteers provided almost all of the labor, including the electrical work which Pastor Ball did himself.

For most of its history the French Broad had limited its active ministries to "the bounds" of the Association. This was to change under the leadership of Director Jenkins. He had served in frontier missions under the Home Mission Board before he came to the French Broad and as Director of Missions he continued to have an interest in that work. In October 1972 he led a team of 18 men and women to Twin Falls, Idaho to construct a church building. A second group returned later to finish the work. In 1977 another group of 21 men and women went to Jackpot, Nevada to build a church; worshipers had been meeting in the Casino. Under the leadership of Dan Young, member of Mt. Sheba

Church, they had raised \$11,000 for materials. The participants paid their own expenses of \$150 each to go, live in tents, and do the construction work. As it was completed the new building included a chapel, fellowship room for a day care center, five classrooms, and two restrooms. The president of the Jackpot Casino contributed \$1,100, plus the use of two hotel rooms each night (for the purpose of taking showers) and meals for three days.

In 1978 a team of 16 men went to Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada to help build a house of worship for Discovery Baptist Church. Each worker paid \$300 for his own expenses on this trip. In May 1980, 16 men from the Association joined two from Raleigh on a trip to build the Temple Baptist Church in Moundsville, West Virginia. Dan Young at Mt. Sheba Church and other helpers had raised \$3,000 for materials. The next year a second team returned to Moundsville and completed the building. In 1981 a second team returned to Jackpot with money to build seven new Sunday School classrooms. In 1982 twenty-three men and women from Tennessee and North Carolina went to work in Escanaba, Michigan to finish a building started by a group from Louisiana. Bill White and Marion White later returned to finish and trim up the brick work. Churches and individuals in the Association gave \$3,880 toward this project.

In January 1982 Worth Emory and Dan Young led a team to Honduras to build a church. They took with them two truck loads of cement mix, a block mold, and other material. In 1983 the Reverend David Clark and his wife accepted an invita-

tion from the Foreign Mission Board to serve as missionaries in Mexico.

To increase interest in missions and to inform church members about the work being undertaken by Baptists around the world, the French Broad sponsored a World Mission Conference in mid-October 1973. Thirty missionaries from home, foreign, state and associational fields came to the Association for a week. Thirty churches participated, each hosting seven speakers for services. It was a meaningful experience for all the people.

The emphasis on missions and the experiences in "hands-on" missions led churches to increase their giving. In 1977 special mission offerings were the greatest thus far in the history of the Association. The Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions was \$17,724.44 and the Annie Armstrong Offering for home missions was \$6,180.91. These gifts, however, were to be exceeded in the years to come. In 1982 the Lottie Moon Offering was \$31,483.38 (thirty-three churches participating) and the Home Mission Offering was \$14,286 (twenty-seven churches participating). The WMU also gave \$1,000 toward the salary of Charles Buckner, missionary in Indonesia; \$3,786.95 for Bible distribution; \$3,998 for Relief and World Hunger; \$3,458 to Broyhill Children's Home; and \$463 for Bold Mission Thrust.

That year, 1982, the 47 churches in the Association gave for all purposes a total of \$1,470,925. Of that amount \$39,731 was designated for the Cooperative Program (34 churches giving) and \$212,803 for missions (41 churches giving). In addition to this regular giving the Association was

also collecting its pledge of \$26,000 toward the purchase of property for the Western North Carolina Home for Aging in Asheville.

The mission offerings reported above indicated healthy and active WMU organizations in many of the local churches. In 1981 eighteen churches had WMS organizations. Under the leadership of Mrs. Locke Robinson and other able officers this ministry made steady improvements every year. Happily, the Brotherhood, or Baptist Men, also had an encouraging renewal during the '70's. In January 1971 an overnight Brotherhood Retreat was held at Mars Hill College. This retreat provided fellowship as well as inspiration and created a new interest in the organizations for men and boys. Moving into action, men helped organize new Royal Ambassador units in three churches.

A second Retreat was held in January 1972 and on Saturday, January 20, 1973 thirty men representing seven churches met for an overnight retreat at Trinity Church. The next day, Sunday, these men spoke at ten different churches during the morning worship service. In 1977 nine churches reported Brotherhood units with 145 men and boys enrolled. By 1979 the enrollment had grown to 154, but over the next several years interest declined and by 1981 there was no report on men's work. There was still interest in mission action, however, because many of the men had become involved in mission trips and in Lay Evangelism efforts—the men just didn't want to attend meetings!

One of Jenkins' most cherished projects was the Bible camp for children. In the summer of 1970

the first of such camps was held at an improvised site on Rich Mountain. One hundred and fifty-four children and adult sponsors participated. With some volunteer assistance Jenkins had cleared out a large hay barn and another building once used by another denomination for a retreat. The barn was used for classrooms and sleeping quarters (after a hurricane blew the tents away) and the second building for kitchen and dining room. He secured a used cafe-type stove for the kitchen and tables and chairs for the dining room. Water had to be brought in from a spigot in the yard. An improvised cold water shower provided simple bathing facilities and a dammed up branch created a swimming pool. Churches in the Association donated food and financial assistance. Campers paid a nominal fee to cover insurance and other expenses. A program including Bible study, an introduction to missions (with an active missionary leading) as well as arts and crafts was provided each morning. Planned recreational activities followed the noon meal. An evening worship service closed out the day.

The camp was held again on Rich Mountain in 1971 and 1972, but early in 1973 Jenkins was injured in a fall and the camp was cancelled for the year. In 1974 the program was renewed, using facilities at Ivy Hill Church. This site was used until 1980, although the camp had to be cancelled in 1977 and was closed after one day in 1979 due to rainy weather.

In July 1980 the Association moved the camp to more adequate facilities at Bear Walla Baptist Camp Grounds near Hendersonville. That year 28

churches were represented by 128 regular campers and almost eighty part time participants. The Rev. David Allman was camp pastor, the Rev. Ralph Hogan camp director, and the Rev. and Mrs. John McGee resident missionaries. The camping ministry has continued to be a successful program year after year. The increased cost of renting camp grounds, however, lead to a proposal that the French Broad secure property and build facilities of its own. The matter was studied for some time but finally rejected as not being feasible.

A radio ministry was another new program initiated by Jenkins. In 1971 the Executive Committee approved a three-month trial of a daily 30-minute gospel broadcast over radio station WMMH. In 1973 the ministry was expanded to include a 30 minute program at 10:30 A.M., fifteen minute devotional at 8:45 A.M. and 4:30 P.M. each day, also an hour program each Sunday evening at 6:00. This last program would be a replay of the morning worship service at Mars Hill Baptist Church. The cost of the expanded ministry was covered by Mt. Sheba Baptist Church and a member, Dan Young. Jenkins provided many of the programs, some years speaking as many as eighty-five times at one or more of the scheduled hours.

There was considerable emphasis on evangelism during the seventies. On March 18, 1972 an Associational Evangelism Rally was held at Locust Grove Church. The Rev. Luther Osment, area missionary for Western North Carolina, spoke, explaining the new ministry of Lay Evangelism. Out of this rally came a program for training laymen to lead Lay Revivals. Meanwhile, a Simul-

taneous Evangelistic Crusade was held in September at Walnut and at Forks of Ivy churches. One hundred and ninety-two baptisms were reported to the Association that year. In 1976 Lay Revival weekends were held in a number of churches throughout the Association.

Director Jenkins gave his full support to the Seminary Extension Program which had been initiated by David Roberts. In 1971 the French Broad Extension Program met the requirements for offering three certificates: Pastoral, Religious Education, and Christian Life. A regular schedule of classes was offered each spring and fall. In 1972 ninety-eight persons were enrolled during the spring and one hundred and nineteen during the fall. One hundred and eighty-eight persons earned credits toward a certificate that year. There was a similar enrollment over the next several years. In June 1978 a graduation for the Seminary Extension program was held at California Creek Church. Three persons were graduated, having completed all the required courses: Worth Emory, pastor of Ivy Hill Church; Lester Murphy, pastor of Middle Fork Church; and Van Jamerson, deacon at Upper Laurel Church.

The Association was fortunate to have a number of qualified persons teach the classes from year to year: Sue Fitzgerald; John McGee, retired missionary; Ralph Hogan; Leland Royster; Rev. and Mrs. David Clark; T. O. High, missionary on furlough; Lee Roy Denton; Charles Buckner, missionary on furlough; Spencer LeGrand, pastor of Marshall Church; Joseph Godwin, William Lynch, and M. H. Kendall, all professors at Mars Hill College.

The Association continued to promote its regular ministries of teaching and training. As was explained in an earlier chapter these were having problems. During the seventies Sunday School enrollment declined from 4,583 in 1969 to 4,099 in 1979. Enrollment grew to 4,293 in 1980 but fell a bit to 4,267 in 1982 and then to 3,992 in 1983. Vacation Bible Schools generally presented a better picture as this program continued to be successful. In 1973 forty-three churches enrolled 2,058 children for one or two weeks of study and fellowship. In 1979 thirty-five churches enrolled 2,206 children. Some churches added classes for adults.

The Training union was still having problems also. In fact there were years during the seventies when no Training Union reports were filed with the Association. In 1973 five workshops in Church Training were held in an effort to promote the ministry. Association minutes for that year give an enrollment of 531 persons at 17 churches. This grew to 728 in 1980.

The Association Youth Committee attempted to supplement the Training Union program. Under the able leadership of Gordon Ball this Committee launched a major drive to enlist young people. The secret to his success lay in his working with representatives of Youth groups to plan their own activities. They planned skating parties for the winter months—125 young people enjoyed a number of these during 1971. Youth Night held at Enon Church that year drew a packed house. In March 1972 the Youth Night program was held in Moore Auditorium on the Mars Hill College campus. A fellowship in Chambers Gymnasium followed the

worship hour. Three hundred and forty-seven persons participated—the largest attendance at any time during the year. One positive outgrowth in these efforts was the organization of youth programs at the Upper Laurel and Chapel Hill churches. A number of young people were also sent to statewide camps for training.

Although it failed to reach some of its goals the French Broad made significant improvements in its ministries during the seventies and early eighties. In spite of the loss of two churches, Pleasant Valley and Foster's Creek, total church membership increased at a time when population in the area was declining. In 1975 churches reported a membership of 8,691; in 1980, they reported 10,019 members. A growing number of churches began adopting a budget system for financing their ministries, and were also writing constitutions as they reorganized their programs. A number of churches purchased buses and were reaching out to larger communities. Twenty percent more churches were contributing through the Cooperative Program and mission offerings were up 44 percent. Congregations throughout the Association were either building new houses of worship or improving the existing ones, adding classrooms and fellowship halls. There was an increasing number of full time and resident pastors, and more congregations were enlisting their pastors in the Annuity Retirement Program. The Association Office began publishing a Newsletter in 1969. In 1977 the messengers to the Annual Session voted to purchase property and build a Baptist Center. A committee was appointed to locate an appropriate site between

Mars Hill and Marshall. In 1978 a new Center for Christian Education Ministries was opened at Mars Hill College, with Sue Fitzgerald as its director. This was to become a great source of help for all local churches.

During the decade the Association also commemorated a number of significant milestones in church history. In 1970 California Creek Church celebrated its 100th birthday. On May 1, 1980 the Association celebrated the 150th Anniversary of the Baptist State Convention. Dr. Cecil Ray and staff from State headquarters provided the program. At its Annual Meeting in 1978 a new gavel made from the remaining wood of the first Bull Creek Church building was presented to the moderator. At the same time Mrs. David Roberts gave the Association one of her husband's prized possessions, a gavel made from a walnut tree cut on the property of the late George W. Truett in Clay County.

• 9 •

A New Baptist Center

In April 1983 Jenkins resigned as Director of Missions to work as full time director of the Bear Walla Camp in Henderson County. On June 23, at a special meeting of the Association, the Rev. Dale Fisher, pastor of Enka Baptist Church, was issued a call to fill the vacancy. He accepted the invitation.

The Mars Hill Baptist Church offered a room in its building as temporary location for an associational office. (Jenkins had rented a trailer for that purpose). Steel Case company donated a desk and credenza for the office and Hoyle Office Supply gave two side chairs and an executive chair. Blue Ridge Printing furnished stationery, envelopes, and cards, and the staff at Mars Hill College prepared a newsletter to all the churches and the Book of Reports for the Annual Meeting. The College continued to permit Fisher to use its printing equipment.

In 1977 a committee had been appointed to locate a proper site and to purchase property for an Associational Center. After extended search one acre of land located on Highway 213, near Mars Hill, was found to be available. At the August Session in 1983 the messengers approved its purchase and took an offering of \$1,200 to be used for that purpose. The land was bought from Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Lambert on September 14 for \$4,500. A Land Dedication Service was held on the property on October 22. At that time a building committee was appointed and directed to draw plans for the Center. The following men made up the committee: Leonard Baker, Worth Emory, Wade Huey, Norman Kennedy, Sibbald Lambert, Billy Murray, and Dan Young. Worth Emory served as chairman until July 1986 when Wade Huey assumed the responsibility.

The Building Committee met many times over the next few months to study the needs and to agree upon plans for the structure. Norman Kennedy, with assistance of Chairman Emory, drew the plans, modeling the design after many features of the Haywood Association Building. On June 23, 1984, at a called meeting of the Association, they presented their plans for a two-level building with three offices, a large workroom, reception area, restroom, and a small conference-media center on the main floor. On the bottom floor there would be a large conference room, utility storage space, restrooms, and a kitchen. The messengers voted their approval and Billy Murray was selected as Project Superintendent.

On Sunday, July 8, 1984 ground was broken for

the new building. The Reverend Tom Lolly, Southwestern Area Missionary, was the speaker for the service. Worth Emory, Chairman of the Building Committee; Director Dale Fisher; Billy Murray, Project Superintendent; and Sibbald Lambert removed the first shovels of dirt. All those attending took part in the "breaking" by pulling a plow across the lot.

A detailed plan for financing the project was approved. It was estimated that the building, site preparation, and furnishings would cost \$80,000. The plan provided that the money be raised in three phases: \$35,000 for basic construction, \$40,000 for the finishings, and a Challenge Goal of \$5,000 for a well. Churches and individuals were asked to make pledges which would be paid over a two-year period. Offerings were taken at Annual Meetings, Special Sessions, and Fifth Sunday Night Singings. The Pastors' wives compiled, printed, and sold cookbooks for a total of \$5,794.50. Honorariums, Memorial and Honor plaques brought in \$2,945.21. Many of the building expenses were paid directly by churches and individuals and thus do not appear as recorded gifts. From all sources funds began to come in rather quickly. Between March 1983 and August 31, 1984, \$30,085.82 was deposited in the Building Fund. Between September 1, 1984 and August 31, 1985, \$39,243.11 came in, leaving a balance of \$15,393.87 to complete the goal of \$80,000. Contributions and interest of \$22,739.10 during 1985-'86 carried the fund to \$87,345.25. All 48 churches had contributed to the project. In 1987 the Building Fund Account was closed with a balance of

\$2,810.82 which was placed in the General Savings Account. A total of \$130,881.38 had been raised to build and furnish the Center, to dig a well and install a septic tank, and to landscape the grounds.

As the Project was begun in 1984 the Building Committee gave a contract to Billy Murray for the construction work and he directed the project through the first year. He hired the plumbers, brick masons, electricians, and men to hang the sheet rock. Most of the finishing work was done by volunteers. This, of course, prolonged the building schedule but saved the Association a lot of money. By August of '85 most of the outside work was done. The wiring and plumbing had been installed and most of the sheet rock on the main floor had been hung. It would be two more years, however, before volunteers could complete the work.

Meanwhile, the regular ministries of the Association were being carried on with the support of leaders from the local churches. In 1983 sixteen churches reported a Training Union membership of 651; in 1986 fourteen churches reported a membership of 574. A Training Workshop was held in March 1984 at Gabriel's Creek Church in an effort to promote the program. "M" night was observed each year.

The Sunday School work was ably led by Lucille Burnette. On March 21, 1985 she led an Associational Sunday School Workshop at Calvary Church in Mars Hill. This included simultaneous conferences for leaders, teachers, and workers for all age groups. In May the Reverend Fisher led a "From Here to Victory" conference at Trinity Church. This

was the final thrust of the "8.5 by '85" Sunday School Enrollment Emphasis being sponsored by the State Convention. Total enrollment in Sunday School that year was 4,683, a slight gain over the preceding year; in 1986 the enrollment fell to 4,470.

Mrs. Lock Robinson still worked with zeal and total commitment to promote missions through the WMU. In 1984 twenty churches had fifty-three mission organizations for women and children, with more than 520 members. They gave \$37,153.44 to foreign missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and \$20,280.11 to home missions through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. This was in addition to the \$1,000 which they gave each year toward the support of Charles Buckner, missionary to Indonesia. Their other gifts included \$2,936.94 for World Relief and Hunger, \$1,052.25 for Bible distribution, \$50 for Associational Bible School materials, \$90 for Association Bible Camp, \$2,035 to Broyhill Children's Home, \$1,877 for special offering to foreign missions, \$373 for support of orphans in foreign countries, \$126.94 for promotion of Acteens, G. A.'s, and Mission Friends. They also gave \$170 to help a high school boy go to Camp Caswell, \$571.50 as a special gift for home missions, and \$365 for the new Baptist Center. Hot Springs and Ivy Hill churches were among the top ten churches in the Southern Baptist Convention for per capital giving to the Easter Offering that year.

In 1986 the WMU observed the Centennial of the North Carolina WMU. It was also the last year for Mrs. Robinson's leadership. She retired after 20

years of dedicated service due to failing health. A portrait painted by her son was hung in the Conference Room at the Center in her honor. That year the women and children gave \$45,267.60 through the Lottie Moon Offering, the largest amount ever given by the Association, and \$22,620.37 through the Annie Armstrong Offering.

With the support of Rev. Fisher, Mike Allen and Robert Walsh, associational Brotherhood directors, worked hard to get men and boys actively involved in Christian ministries. Very few churches had men's organizations but a large number of men responded to their leadership. On October 27, 1983 a Father and Son Banquet was held at Bull Creek Church with the Rev. Fisher as speaker for the evening. On March 15, 1984 a Brotherhood workshop was conducted at the First Baptist Church in Marshall. The Rev. Gayle Brown, Region IX Brotherhood Coordinator, led the men's group and the Rev. Eddie Petit, of the State Brotherhood Department, led the group of Royal Ambassadors. In May the men and boys had a Campout at Glory Ridge. In October the Father and Son Banquet was held at Locust Grove Church, with the Rev. Luther Osment as speaker. Another men and boys Campout closed out the year. Ten churches had one or more organizations for men and/or boys with a total membership of 119.

Reports for 1986 only list three churches with Brotherhood organizations, but several churches participated in activities for men and boys. The Annual Father and Son Banquet was held at California Creek Church in October. Some churches were regularly having Men's Breakfast; others had

"work days" when their men and boys gathered to paint or make other repairs around the church. Other service activities in which men and boys were involved included cutting wood for elderly people in the community, assisting a family in constructing a water line to their house, Car Washes and Bike-a-thons to raise money for missions, and softball games to bring men and boys together for fun and fellowship. A number of men scheduled their vacations so they could help with the Bible Camp each summer.

Several of the men in the Association also continued to be active in mission outreach projects. In January 1984 Chester Franklin of the Chapel Hill Church joined a group of men going to Haiti to build a church house. During the same month Worth Emory raised the money for materials and led a group from the Association to Venezuela to build a church.

The Associational Youth Committee was also active during the early eighties. Under the leadership of Buddy Freeman, the Committee sponsored a Dating Seminar and a Youth Jamboree Crusade in April 1983. Barry Wood of Lubbock, Texas was the preacher and Richard Campbell provided special music. Thirteen young people accepted Christ as Savior and four committed themselves to full time Christian service during the Crusade. Churches provided financial support for this project.

On June 22, 1985 the Committee sponsored the French Broad Baptist Youth Olympics held in the Mars Hill College gymnasium. Hopewell Church won first place, Forks of Ivy Church came in second, and Piney Mountain, third. Several

churches furnished lunch for the participants. A worship period followed the lunch hour. Robby West, associational summer intern, provided special music and the Rev. Fisher led the worship.

The Association Bible Camp was held again at the Bear Walla Camp Grounds in July 1983. One hundred and thirty-one children and their leaders registered for the week. A nice addition to the Camp was a brand new swimming pool. In July 1984 one hundred and forty-seven regular campers, plus a large number of visitors, enrolled for the week. Twenty-eight churches in the French Broad and thirteen outside the Association were represented in that number. In July 1985 enrollment jumped to 189; the camp only had space for 173. The personnel responded enthusiastically to the overflow number, however, and worked around the clock giving love and care to each child. By the close of the week twenty-eight children had made professions of faith. The enrollment for the year made it advisable for the camp committee to find a new location for 1986.

Seminary Extension classes were provided each spring and fall as usual. In the spring of '83 fifty-seven persons were enrolled in the study of "Life and Faith of Baptists" and in an Old Testament Survey. During the Associational year of 1984 there were five classes taught at four centers, Belva being a new location. Unfortunately, spring classes in 1985 had to be cancelled but during the fall classes were enrolled for the study of "Leadership Development" and the "Book of Exodus."

A few special items add interest to this period of the early eighties. In 1983 the Bull Creek Congre-

gation began restoration of the old church house in which the founders had first worshiped. The old logs and stones were reclaimed and brought to the grounds of the present building. The restored structure will serve as a museum where old records and memorabilia will tell the history of the church. During the same year Paint Fork Church celebrated its 100th birthday.

In 1984 the Neighbors-in-Need program was initiated. Through this project churches joined hands with other community organizations to provide relief for those needing help. During the year eight churches and a number of individuals gave \$2,048.10 to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund.

During the summer of 1985 two young men came to work in the Association as interns from Mars Hill College and the University of North Carolina at Asheville. They were of particular help with the youth program.

In the spring of '85 an Associational Choir presented a Cantata at Easter time. William Pegg trained the choir until his untimely death; Jerry Jarrell directed the final performance.

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When Dreams Come True

*I*n the spring of '86 Dale Fisher accepted a call to serve in Caldwell Association and that not only left the French Broad without a Director of Missions but also without a secretary, a position his wife had ably filled. At the same time Barbara Bennett, Associational Treasurer, resigned. The Mission committee hosted an appreciation dinner at Western Steer for the three and reluctantly said goodbye to these faithful and competent leaders.

At the Annual Session in August, Troy Rogers, Chairman of the Mission Committee, gave a report on their search for a new director. He then introduced the Rev. Joe Edwards and moved his election. The messengers unanimously approved the motion.

Edwards inherited the task of finishing the Baptist Center. Due to death in the family of one of the builders and to the lack of funds, completion

had been delayed. An appeal to the churches, however, brought in more funds and by early spring of '87 the work was well on the way to being completed. The Building Committee, with the enthusiastic support of Director Edwards, moved to finish the project as soon as possible. They borrowed \$20,000 to cover additional costs of construction, landscaping, and for the purchase of furnishings. Money was given to purchase dishes, glasses, and silverware to serve 100 people. Meanwhile, a well was dug and a septic system was installed. With the work nearing completion, April 26 was selected as a date for the Dedication service. A Committee was appointed to prepare for the Opening; another was appointed to look after and care for the building.

The building of the Center had been a joint effort of many interested and dedicated persons and churches. The names of those who worked as carpenters, those who did the grading and site preparation, and those who did the hauling, painting, landscaping, cleaning, and finally moving office equipment and records from temporary quarters in the Mars Hill Church and setting up of furniture and equipment in the new building would compile a list too long to be included here. Some came as individuals to offer their services; others came in groups, representing particular churches. Even students from Mars Hill College, under the leadership of Harrell Wood, helped with the painting. Every church in the Association contributed financially to the project. All working together they made a dream of twenty years come true.

At the Annual Session on August 11, 1988 the

messengers held a note-burning ceremony and the note for \$20,000 was burned. This debt which was to be paid by September 15 of that year had been over subscribed by August. The money had been raised through the sale of cookbooks, the purchase of memorial and honor plaques, and by direct gifts from individuals and churches. In 1984 ground had been broken for the Center; now four years later, the Association had paid for the new facility and was free of all debts. It was a great year for the French Broad.

That same year the Annual Session accepted a recommendation from the Associational Council and the Executive Committee to do long-range planning, to draw plans for the next five years. The Rev. Bobby Stafford came from the State office to advise and instruct the leaders on setting up the proper work force. Dr. Bill Collins was chosen to serve as Director along with a steering committee composed of the following members: Rev. Stanley Peek, Wade Huey, and Evelyn Underwood. Task Groups were formed to deal with the several areas to be studied. After a year of hard work the final report was presented to the Association in August 1989. The messengers approved the report and the plan as presented. According to the report the major objective of the proposed plan was reaching people by developing and strengthening the local churches, by assisting in the development of strong educational programs in all churches, by encouraging the churches to involve all of their members in programs of study and active mission work, by leading the churches in their efforts to prepare young people to live a Christian life in present day

society, and by building an understanding relationship among all Christian churches. These are goals worthy of the full support of all churches in any association. The story of the decade shows how the French Broad worked toward these objectives.

During the eighties the Association was very active in the promotion of Christian education. Sunday School workshops and clinics for Vacation Bible School workers were held each year, and all churches were encouraged to have Vacation Bible Schools for their children and youth. To assist teachers and other church workers the Center expanded its holdings of material and helps for Bible study, music, missions, and other church programs. These holdings, along with the collection at the Center for Christian Education at Mars Hill College, offered superior assistance to churches in the French Broad. A VCR was also available for use by any church group wishing to hold meetings at the center.

In addition to all these helps, the Association continued to provide Seminary Extension courses. In 1987 five courses were offered, three in the spring and two in the fall. Worth Emory, who had already earned the Pastoral Ministries Diploma, completed twenty-four courses for a second diploma in Growth and Ministry; other individuals completed courses of study year after year. Three College level courses were given during 1988-89 with a total of 38 persons enrolled in the three. During the spring of 1990 three other courses were offered. In 1989 a new optional program was introduced. Through this program individuals were offered the chance to work toward a diploma in

Ministry Training to be awarded by one of the Southern Baptist seminaries. This new diploma would require 69 semester hours. Up to half of that number could be earned through correspondence study. Under this same plan persons who were not vocational ministers could choose to earn a new Certificate in Christian Studies. Requirements for diplomas and certificates currently being given remained unchanged. Beginning in 1988 another new study was added, Masterlife classes for those wishing to become more effective witnesses.

Along with these major efforts to promote Christian Education, the associational officers worked faithfully in their particular fields. Lucille Burnette and her Assisteam tried diligently to promote Sunday Schools. During the fall of 1989, Louise Edwards, Adult Assisteam Leader, held a conference at the Center for adult workers to strengthen their teaching skills. In March 1990 the Assisteam held an Associational Training Conference at Trinity Baptist Church. Thirty-four persons from thirteen churches attended. Such conferences were provided on a regular basis. Unfortunately, many churches did not take advantage of this assistance.

During this period the traditional Training Union program, which had been losing ground, was expanded and revitalized as Church Training or Discipleship Training. The revised program was planned to attract adults as well as young people to a renewed understanding of what it means to be a Baptist and to train leaders for the church. In 1986, fourteen churches had such a program with 574 persons participating. In 1990 the fourteen churches had 422

participants. A few other churches had a program for new converts and new members.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Zeola Hogan the Association WMU continued its program of educating children and adults about missions and to gather gifts for State, Home, and Foreign Missions. In 1989 there were 50 organizations of women and children in nineteen churches with a membership of 449. Unfortunately, most of the French Broad churches have failed to realize the importance of the Women's organizations even though their contributions to mission causes reflect the pervasive influence of the Women's work. In '89 the Women in the 19 churches raised \$14,264 for State Missions, \$54,798 for Foreign Missions, and \$26,678 for Home Missions. Annual offerings continued to increase throughout the eighties.

Meanwhile the Association's mission committee was continuing to promote missions through outreach projects. With the cooperation of the Baptist State Convention the Association began a Resort Ministry at Wolf Laurel Ski Lodge on December 21, 1986. The Rev. John Bussard was employed as "Minister on call" for skiers and other visitors and personnel at the Resort. Services of 30 to 45 minutes were held in front of the fireplace at the Lodge. Volunteers from churches and Mars Hill College provided music. The worship opportunities were well received by most of the guests and were attended by people of all denominations. The State Convention contributed \$1,000 toward Bussard's salary. The program was continued through 1991; Jim and Lisa Dean took over the work after Bussard resigned. Due to a poor ski

season and to the fact that Jim and Lisa were unable to return in '92, the ministry was discontinued for the time being.

In June 1990, after two months of preparation, the Mars Hill Baptist Church accepted the Association's suggestion that it undertake a ministry at the Ivy Ridge multihousing community. The ministry opened with a "Kick-off Day" on June 16. Volunteers from the church staged a carnival with games, contests, music and lunch for all residents and participating members of the church. Most of the residents and some 30 members of the church shared in this joyous occasion. Weekly activities for the children and several special events for adults or the entire family were provided through the summer and fall. Plans for a Big A Bible Club for the children and Bible Study for adults, also an evening worship service were being planned for the fall and winter, but the local administration withdrew its permission to use their facilities and playgrounds and the ministry had to be discontinued in the spring of '91.

Some follow-up contacts have been continued through a few residents who began attending the Mars Hill Church and through the "Thanksgiving Turkeys" project. In 1991 Malcolm Privette of Gainsville, Florida gave the Association turkeys to be distributed to needy families; the Mars Hill Church received 200 of these. One Sunday School class at the church contributed vegetables and "the fixings" to go along with turkeys which were distributed, most of them going to residents in the Ivy Ridge community.

Churches in the Association also maintained a

ministry for residents in Madison Manor Health Center. The Mission Groups at Mars Hill Baptist Church provided a weekly Bible Study for all residents able to attend and the Senior Adult Council of the church carried on a regular visitation ministry at both Health care Centers in the county. In the spring of 1989 the Rev. Jerry Shelton, pastor of Laurel Bend Church, assumed pastoral duties at Madison Manor Health Center.

In 1988 the Rev. Glenn Burrell accepted the responsibility for coordinating a jail ministry. Volunteers have continued to provide services, as well as counseling, for the prisoners held in Marshall.

Mission Outreach also continued to take members "beyond the bounds" of the Association. In February 1986 Pastor Steve Robinson of Mount Pleasant Church went to Tanzania as a member of a team to witness and work. In October 1987 a team from Marshall First Baptist conducted a lay-revival for Surf City Baptist Church in Surf City, North Carolina. During the same month James Fish of the Mars Hill Church went with a team of North Carolina Baptist men to Poland to work on a seminary building, and Elizabeth Cheek went with Wycliffe Bible Translators to work in the Dominican Republic.

In March 1989 Edith Swann and Evelyn Underwood of the Mars Hill Church went with an evangelism team to serve in Sao Paulo, Brazil for two weeks. Middle Fork Church endorsed Melanee Eatman to go with a group of college students to work in Kenya, Africa.

In January 1990 Edith Swann went as a volunteer to work in Ghana, Africa for three months. In

February Worth Emory went with a group to build a church in Honduras. Later in the year another group, including E. J. and Edith Jenkins, Harvey and Janey Franklin, Ralph Hogan, Worth Emory, and Dan Young, went to Rogerson, Idaho to complete a church building. Meanwhile, Piney Mountain Church was involved in the Western North Carolina Rescue Mission.

In October 1988 the French Broad sponsored a World Missions Conference. Missionaries representing State, Home, and Foreign fields challenged members to "be missionaries". Twenty-eight churches participated, and 255 persons made commitments to serve wherever they were needed.

The Association has been fortunate to have missionaries-in-residence almost every year. Dr. R. L. Moore's home in Mars Hill has been furnished as a "missionary's home" and missionaries on furlough are invited to use it. The following is a list of those who have come: 1987-88, Don and Elaine Crane, from Malaysia; 1988-89, Max and Joan Furr, from Peru; 1989-90, Paul and Faye Burkwall, from Nigeria; 1990-91, Eugene and Nancy Hines, from Japan; 1991-92, Glenn and Cindy Graves, from Dominican Republic; 1992 Fall, Victor and Lucinda Lyons, from Chile; 1993 Fall, Lloyd and Connie Rodgers, from Venezuela. These have always given freely of their time to speak and serve in any way they could.

In 1986 twenty churches in the Association participated in the Good News America, God Loves You Crusade sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1987 the French Broad had its first Association wide revival, held in the Mars Hill

College stadium. The Rev. Greg Mathis, pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville, was the preacher. An associational choir under the direction of Stanley Peek and special groups from local churches provided music for the services. Offerings taken not only covered expenses for the revival, but made a contribution of \$859 toward debt on the Baptist Center.

Another association wide revival was held in the college stadium during the first week of August 1988. In June 1989 the third such revival was held in the Moore Auditorium on the college campus with the Rev. Mathis again the speaker. Annual revivals have been continued but held in local churches with local pastors doing the preaching.

Music has always been a part of Baptist life and worship but during the eighties the associational music ministry was expanded. The Fifth Sunday Night Singings were well attended and served to encourage churches to improve their music programs - or to begin one. About half of the churches in 1985 reported both adult and children's choirs; in 1989 thirty-nine reported on music programs.

In March 1985 William Pegg, song director at Calvary Church in Mars Hill, had organized the first association wide choir and led it in preparing an Easter cantata. After his untimely death, Jerry Jarrell, minister of music at the Mars Hill Baptist Church, had led the choir in its performance of "Up From The Grave". On March 29, 1987 a forty-two member associational choir, directed by Mr. Jarrell, presented "I Will Sing Of My Redeemer" at the Mars Hill Church. On March 19, 1989 singers from twelve churches again presented the cantata,

"Up From The Grave". On April 29, 1990 eighty-two persons, including singers, five instrumentalists, four actors, two directors, and a sound technician, presented the musical drama, "Celebrate Life". Sixteen churches participated in the choir and over 400 people attended the presentation — the largest crowd ever to attend an associational program.

The Summer Bible Camp continued to be a major event on the calendar of each year. In 1987, due to financial complications with the former camp site, the Camp Committee decided to use South Mountain Camp, near Morganton, but in 1988 they returned to Camp Bear Walla (its name was changed to Camp Wayfarer in 1991). The enrollment of campers continued to climb as did the number of churches participating. Each year children made professions of faith in Christ and all campers received training and inspiration that left a lasting impact on their lives.

Two important changes were made in the structure and functioning of the Association during the eighties and nineties. In 1987 a constitutional revision changed the Executive Committee. Under the revision this committee was replaced by a larger group which would include not only associational officers but also the pastor and two elected lay-members from each church. The Moderator would serve as chairman of the enlarged group. The former Executive Committee would be called the Associational Council and the Vice-Moderator would serve as its chairman. By creating the mini-associational gathering the planners hoped to involve more church members and thus increase participation in and support for associational min-

istries. The smaller committee would study the needs of the Association and make recommendations to the Executive Committee and to the Annual Sessions.

Another very important change came with the incorporation of the Association in 1990. During the summer of 1989 several officers and leaders began to assess the need for such a move. After several months of study, they came to the conclusion that incorporation was the appropriate way to free individual officers, churches, and even individual members of local churches from liability should the French Broad ever be sued in court for damages. On May 5, 1990 the Executive Committee authorized the following persons to act as "initial incorporators and as the initial board of directors for the establishment of a non-profit corporation; and to take all steps necessary to incorporate the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association under the laws of the State of North Carolina": Rev. Dean Grindstaff, Moderator; Rev. Steve Honeycutt, Vice-Moderator; Elizabeth Clayton, Clerk; Joe Blair, Treasurer; Aaron Sronce, Trustee; Tom Tilson, Trustee; and Bobby Hernandez, Trustee. These persons, in cooperation with Joe Edwards, Director of Missions, Rev. Stanley Peek, Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and Attorney Forrest F. Ball, proceeded to incorporate the Association under the name, "French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc." At the Annual Session on August 10, the messengers voted unanimously to approve the action. (See Appendix for a copy of the new Constitution; Resolution to Incorporate can be found in the *Annual* for 1990.)

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Looking to the Future

*A*t the meeting of the Executive Committee on November 2, 1990 Joe Edwards submitted his resignation as Director of Missions, to become effective on June 30, 1991, and it was accepted with sincere regrets. Edwards felt that he must find work less demanding than the all-consuming responsibility for 49 churches. The Association said a sad farewell to him and his wife Louise with a reception on April 28. The Bethel Church bought a beautiful plaque and placed it at the Center in their honor.

The Personnel Committee immediately began its search for a replacement. After reviewing more than fifty applications they all agreed to recommend the Rev. Troy Rogers, pastor of Bethel Church and moderator of the Association, for that position. A special session of the Association on April 11 voted unanimously to approve the recommenda-

tion. They also elected Geleen Roberts to replace Louise Edwards who had served as secretary. The Rev. Paul Silver was chosen to fill out Roger's term as moderator.

Director Rogers began at once to build on the foundations he had inherited from those who had preceded him. He continued to promote, and to expand, the Association's efforts in mission outreach. In November '91 the Missions Committee led churches to support Operation Santa Clause for Broughton Hospital. Members brought small gifts as lotion, toboggans, tooth brushes and paste, athletic socks, after shave lotion, and other items to brighten the patients' holidays. In December the WMU gave \$10 to each woman resident at the Correction Center for Women. This would enable them to give their children something for Christmas.

The Missions Committee continued to work with the staff at Madison Manor Health Center and Elderberry Health Center. They secured names of residents who needed special assistance and then attempted to match these persons with churches near their homes. Volunteers from the churches then provided ministry not only for the assigned residents but also for their families. Meanwhile, the Association named Myron Roberts as Associational Chaplain to visit Madison Manor and to provide a ministry at the county jail. Mr. Rogers, the Director of Missions, became the chaplain for Madison County Hospice.

In '92 Malcolm Privette again donated 367 smoked turkeys for distribution at Thanksgiving. These were divided among the churches wishing to

cooperate and were given to needy families in each community.

The Association also became involved in Habitat for Humanity as local church members volunteered to help build three houses for families who could not otherwise afford a home. Interest in this program continued to grow, and a number of churches became actively involved, providing labor and financial assistance.

Outreach for missions again took individuals and groups to serve in other countries. In '91 Worth Emory and Kevin McMillan went on a mission trip to Honduras. In 1992 the most exciting mission project was sending two groups to Brazil to build churches. In September twenty-one men and women went to build a chapel in Aqua Clara, a village with no evangelical church. In late November twenty-three men went to build a church house (the first permanent structure) in the remote village of Taquarel. On November 12, 1993 a third group of 21 went to Brazil to build a house of worship for a remote community. In January '93 Worth Emory, pastor of Ivy Hill Church, returned to Honduras as a member of a construction team.

In 1992 the Association responded to the victims of Hurricane Andrew, as they had earlier helped the victims of Hugo. Ted Roberts took a trailer load of food, water, supplies, and building materials. Fred and Doris Bentley of Mars Hill College went for a week with the North Carolina Brotherhood to help repair houses destroyed by the storm. The Association also sent \$1635 to help Baptist Men finance their ministry with the victims.

In '92 churches in the French Broad made donations and/or pledges of \$20,027.05 to the Baptist Retirement Nursing Care Unit at Richmond Hill in Asheville.

In addition to these Association wide efforts, many of the local churches responded to other needs in their communities. Volunteers provided transportation for the elderly, planned visitation to shut-ins and families experiencing illness or death, and gathered food and other supplies for Neighbors-in-Need, Hospice, and the Crisis Center. Church groups also provided assistance for burned-out families or those suffering from other disasters.

Annual revivals continued to hold an important place in the Association's schedule of ministries. In June 1991 a Youth Revival was held at First Baptist Church in Marshall. It was led by a youth choir from Valdosta, Georgia, which not only led the revival but also conducted a daily vacation Bible school at Easter Gap Church and at Ivy Ridge Housing Community. The revival was closed with a dinner, a Youth Rally, and a presentation of the musical, "People Need the Lord". In August '93 a second Youth Revival was held at California Creek Church. In September '91 and again in May '92 Association wide revivals were held in local churches with local pastors doing the preaching.

In 1993 the Bible Camp committee decided to leave Camp Wayfarer and go to Palmetto Bible Camp just across the state line in South Carolina for the July camping experience. Two hundred and ten campers, including adults, were enrolled. An enlarged kitchen staff did the cooking (their kitchen received a Grade A rating from the Health Depart-

ment Inspection Team). Twenty-one children responded to the program of the week by making professions of faith in Christ.

The Associational music director as before continued to promote music as an important part of worship and to help churches improve their programs. On Sunday, April 21, 1991 an associational choir of 25 singers from eleven churches presented "Sing Unto the Lord a New Song" at the Mars Hill Baptist Church. Vicki Wood was the accompanist and Jerry Jarrell the director.

Approximately 200 people attended the service.

On the weekend of March 27-29, 1992 forty-four children and adults from ten churches took part in an over-night children's music retreat at Mars Hill Baptist Church. On Sunday afternoon they presented selections for "Hide 'Em In Your Heart". Elaine Gregg served as guest conductor, Holly Jarrell as accompanist, and Robin Smathers as project organizer.

Beginning on Friday evening, March 19, 1993, thirty adults from ten churches came together for a weekend retreat at the Mars Hill Church. Neal Eller, Associate Director of Music for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, was the guest conductor and Holly Jarrell the accompanist. Special desserts for the weekend were provided by the women of Calvary Baptist Church and a buffet lunch on Saturday was catered by Cafe Nostalgia of Mars Hill. The worship service on Sunday afternoon included several congregational hymn medleys as well as the special choir selections. The director of missions, the pastor and minister of music of Mars Hill Baptist and the

pastor of Calvary Baptist participated in the program.

The Associational Music Ministry was awarded the Basic Standard of Excellence by the Baptist Sunday School Board for the 1990-1991 year. This standard required completing a number of steps in planning, evaluating, training, and providing Association wide music events.

Director Rogers was strongly committed to discipling church members and to the training of church leaders. At the Executive Committee meeting on May 1, 1992 Martha Hicks, Area Coordinator for the Baptist State Convention, presented materials and discussed the Discipleship Training Program. Later in the month Associational officers attended the Key Leadership Conference at Ridgecrest. During the 1992-1993 year the Association provided workshops for Deacons, Sunday School workers, Discipleship Training, WMU, Brotherhood, Music, Vacation Bible School and Literacy. Seminary Extension courses were offered each spring and fall.

On September 1, 1992 a deacon's conference was held at the First Baptist Church in Marshall. During the month Rogers taught "The Ministry of the Deacon," on three Monday nights at the Center. Over sixty deacons registered for those classes.

On November 23, 1992 "M" Night was held at Upper Laurel Church with 130 persons from eleven churches attending. Although only eleven churches reported a Discipleship Training Program, many others provided training in church membership through other programs.

Under the leadership of Claudia Reavis the

Associational WMU officers were active in the promotion of mission programs. Moreover, the organization assumed responsibility for a new work, the Literacy Mission. The officers attended a Literacy Conference at UNCA on May 1. They followed up on this with workshops and training sessions to prepare local workers.

During this period the Center was able to acquire several pieces of additional equipment, a new stencil cutter, a used mimeograph machine, and a new computer. These greatly facilitated the keeping of records and the general office work carried on at the Center. The Properties Committee was also faithful in maintaining the building and grounds. Renovations and repairs were made to the building, and volunteer workers gave hours of free labor to replace shrubbery, spray weeds, mark off the parking lot, and build display shelves in the conference rooms. Baptists in the French Broad are proud of their Center.

Baptists can also be proud of their Association. Over the past one hundred and eighty-six years much as been accomplished that could not, or would not, have been done without the guiding hand of this organization. Directed by the Association leaders, Sunday Schools moved from the situation in which many even questioned the Biblical authority for such a program to the present wholesale acceptance of the responsibility for teaching God's Word and providing Christian Education for all children and adults. Although it came somewhat later, many of the local churches have come to see that leading persons to accept Christ as a personal Savior is not enough but that it is also

important to disciple new converts and help them to grow into mature Christians. It is also safe to say that without the leadership of the Association and its programs churches would never have given \$434,751 to missions in 1992, and sent groups and individuals to build churches and serve with "frontier missions" in the United States, and other groups and individuals to build and serve in countries from Central and South America to Europe and Africa.

With the exception of a few years when the associations in Western North Carolina formed their own convention, the French Broad has always cooperated with the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. Even during the early years Annual Sessions included reports on missions, Sunday Schools, Christian Education, and other statewide programs. Through the years there were strong leaders who spoke and worked to help churches expand their vision and to minister to all the needs of the people. The record as given in this history stands as a memorial to all of these faithful men and women.

One more development made the early nineties a significant period in the history of the Association. During the summer and fall of 1993 representatives of the French Broad and of the New Found Association began a conversation about a possible union of the two groups. It had become evident that there was a growing interest in such a move. After several months of discussion within New Found congregations, nine churches in that body met in a special session on January 16, 1994, and voted to dissolve their association and to request mem-

bership in the French Broad. They also requested that two churches currently closed (Ball City Baptist Church and Flats of Spring Creek Baptist Church) be accepted lest they be taken over by some cult groups. The nine churches requesting the union were: Bear Creek, Caney Fork, Jones Valley, Liberty, Lower Pig Pine, Lusk Chapel, Paynes Chapel, Redmon, and Zion.

The French Broad leadership responded positively to this request. They called a special session of the Association on Sunday, January 23, and invited the New Found churches to attend. In spite of inclement weather approximately 200 persons met at Hot Spring church. Rev. Frank Willett, moderator of the New Found Association, read their request for a union with the French Broad. After a short explanation concerning the two churches currently closed, a motion to accept the nine churches was approved by a unanimous vote. The Rev. Troy Rogers, Director of Missions, recommended that the two groups build the new relationship by taking part in a simultaneous revival in 1995. This was also approved.

For all it was a happy reunion after a separation of 139 years. Much had changed in both Associations. Only one of the original seven churches forming the New Found in 1855, Bear Creek Church, remained as a member of that group; the other eight churches had been added since that date. The French Broad had also lost members and added others during the century and a half. Now there is an opportunity for the reunited group to move forward together in the work of the Kingdom. Future historians will record the story of its accomplishments.

**NEW FOUND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
273 Brickyard Road, Asheville, NC 28806**

Mr. Moderator:

These churches of the New Found Baptist Association, having duly voted in favor of merging with the FRENCH BROAD ASSOCIATION are:

Bear Creek Baptist Church
Caney Fork Baptist Church
Jones Valley Baptist Church
Liberty Baptist Church
Lower Big Pine Baptist Church
Lusk Chapel Baptist Church
Paynes Chapel Baptist Church
Redmon Baptist Church
Zion Baptist Church

We now request acceptance into the FRENCH BROAD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION. We request special consideration for two churches are now closed. They are BALL CITY BAPTIST CHURCH and FLATS OF SPRING CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, that they be accepted to prevent any take over of any Cult Groups.

WHEREAS acceptance of the Churches in the New Found Association, we now dissolve the New Found Association.

Mr. Moderator and members of the FRENCH BROAD ASSOCIATION, we look forward to being a part of the great fellowship with you and for the furtherance of the Gospel of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Frank Willett, (Moderator)
Rev. Danny Little (Vice Moderator)
Rev. Joe Coffey (Director of Missions)
Rev. Matthew Sams (Asst. Dir. Missions)
Michael Worley (Secretary - Treasurer)
Debbie Willett (Clerk)

**PLACE AND DATE OF THE MEETINGS
OF THE FRENCH BROAD ASSOCIATION
WITH THE NAMES OF THE
MODERATOR, CLERK, AND PREACHERS**

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
1830	Cane Creek	S. Morgan	William Kimsey	William Kimsey
1831	Flat Creek	Stephen Morgan	William Kimsey	Thos. Stradley
1832	Roan Mountain			Wm. Reese (*)
1833	Newfound	Stephen Morgan	William Kimsey	Elder Jordan
1834	Bulea (Buncombe Co.)			
1841	Newfound	Stephen Morgan	Luke L. Branson	Stephen Morgan
1842	Roan Mountain	Robert Patterson	Stephen Morgan	Luke L. Branson
1843	Big Ivy	Robert Patterson	Luke L. Branson	Peter Miller
1844	Walnut Creek	Robert Patterson	Luke L. Branson	Stephen Morgan
1845	Bethlehem	Robert Patterson	Luke L. Branson	Wm. Reese
1846	Little Ivy	Stephen Morgan	Luke L. Branson	Posey Parham
1847	Bull Creek	Stephen Morgan	Luke L. Branson	Stephen Collins (R. Patterson, *)
1850	Big Laurel	Robert Patterson	L. Palmer	John Parham
1851	Newfound	Robert Patterson	L. Palmer	James Hooker
1852	Flag Pond	H. W. Gilbert	L. Palmer	S. Wallin
1853	Caney River	Robert Patterson	L. Palmer	H. W. Gilbert
1854	Forks of Ivy	Robert Patterson	L. Palmer	James Hooker
1855	Walnut Creek	H. W. Gilbert	Luke L. Branson	Jacob Metcalf
1856	Middle Fork	H. W. Gilbert	Luke L. Branson	Leroy Sams
1857	Flag Pond			
1860	Bull Creek	L. W. Sams	W. E. Tilson	J. J. Sparks (J. W. Hooker, *)
1861	Caney River			
1873	Flag Pond	G. W. Gosnell	W. E. Tilson	W. T. Bradley
1874	Walnut Creek			
1875	Bull Creek	John Ammons	W. T. Bradley	John Ammons (J. W. Hooker, *)
1876	California			
1878	Caney River	John Ammons	W. E. Tilson	John Ammons (Jesse Wallin, *)

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
1879	Morgan Hill			
1881	Bull Creek	W. T. Bradley	W. P. Jervis	John Ammons
1882	Mt. Pleasant	W. T. Bradley	W. P. Jervis	W. W. Wells
				(J.W. Anderson,*)
1883	Little Ivy	T. M. Honeycutt	W. P. Jervis	J. W. Anderson
1884	Flag Pond	T. M. Honeycutt	W. P. Jervis	John Ammons
1885	West Fork	T. M. Honeycutt	W. P. Jervis	L. W. Sams
1886	Middle Fork	J. R. Sams	W. P. Jervis	J. A. Bradley
1887	Mars Hill	J. R. Sams	J. F. Tilson	John Ammons
1888	Flag Pond	W. P. Jervis	J. F. Tilson	L. W. Sams
1889	Laurel Branch	W. P. Jervis	J. F. Tilson	Jesse Wallin
1890	Califomia	J. A. Bradley	J. F. Tilson	J. M. Ammons
1891	Walnut Creek	J. A. Bradley	W. C. Sprinkle	
1892	Mars Hill	J. A. Bradley	W. C. Sprinkle	John E. White
1893	Terry's Fork	T. M. Honeycutt	J. F. Tilson	W. A. Sams
1894	Gabriels Creek	T. M. Honeycutt	J. F. Tilson	T. M. Honeycutt
1895	Walnut Creek	John Ammons	J. W. Briggs	L. J. Bradley (J.A. Bradley,*)
1896	Flag Pond	J. Q. Tilson	S. Jeter Honeycutt	T. M. Honeycutt
1897	Grapevine	T. F. Tilson	W. P. Jervis	L. T. Bailey
1898	Califomia	J. F. Tilson	S. E. Tweed	J. F. Sams
1899	Big Laurel	J. F. Tilson	S. E. Tweed	J. W. Briggs
1900	Marshall	J. F. Tilson	Elver A. Ponner	John Ammons
1901	Mars Hill	John Ammons	J. Henry Buckner	Josiah Crudup
1902	Paint Gap	John Ammons	Elver A. Ponner	John Ammons
1903	Upper Laurel	John Ammons	H. M. Fagan	Oscar E. Sams
1904	Foster's Creek	L. J. Bailey	H. M. Fagan	L. H. Bailey
1905	Marshall	John Ammons	H. M. Fagan	F. A. Clark
1906	Piney Mountain	John Ammons	H. M. Fagan	T. C. King
1907	Mars Hill	J. F. Tilson	H. M. Fagan	A. E. Brown
1908	Big Laurel	J. F. Tilson	H. M. Fagan	W. R. Cullom
1909	Bethel	John Ammons	G. G. Hopson	J. B. Rice
1910	Forks of Ivy	A. J. Sprinkle	R. L. Moore	E. R. Harris
1911	Laurel Branch	A. J. Sprinkle	W. P. Jervis	R. D. Ponder
1912	Peek's Chapel	A. J. Sprinkle	W. P. Jervis	W. E. Goode
1913	Madison Seminary	A. J. Sprinkle	J. F. Cheek	J. A. Bradley
1914	Grand View	J. F. Tilson	J. F. Cheek	L. J. Bailey
1915	Middle Fork	J. F. Tilson	H. M. Fagan	W. P. McCarter

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
1916	Bull Creek	J. F. Tilson	W. P. Jervis	S. T. Hensley
1917	California	J. F. Tilson	W. P. Jervis	J. R. Owen
1918	Locust Grove	J. A. Bradley	W. P. Jervis	J. A. Bradley
1919	Laurel Seminary	J. M. Pickens	W. P. Jervis	L. C. Roberts
1920	Enon	A. J. Sprinkle	W. P. Jervis	J. C. Pipes
1921	Foster's Creek	A. J. Sprinkle	W. P. Jervis	L. C. Roberts
1922	Forks of Ivy	R. L. Moore	W. P. Jervis	J. M. Pickens
1923	Paint Gap	R. L. Moore	Fred Jervis	R. P. McCracken
1924	Piney Mountain	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	S. T. Hensley
1925	Grapevine	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	G. G. Gregory
1926	Marshall	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	L. R. Williams
1927	Mars Hill	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	H. L. Smith
1928	Walnut	J. H. Hutchins	Fred Jervis	S. M. Stroupe
1929	Grandview	J. H. Hutchins	Fred Jervis	N. H. Griffin
1930	Forks of Ivy	L. J. Ammons	Fred Jervis	Perry Sprinkle
1931	Grapevine	L. J. Ammons	Fred Jervis	J. H. McMillan
1932	Locust Grove	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	D. K. Corn
1933	Peek's Chapel	L. C. Roberts	Fred Jervis	W. E. Abrams
1934	Upper Laurel	W. A. Sams	Wade White	L. B. Olive
1935	Bull Creek	W. A. Sams	Wade White	J. C. McLeod
1936	Long Branch	D. K. Corn	Wade White	Hoyt Blackwell
1937	California	D. K. Corn	Wade White	N. H. Griffin
1938	Big Laurel	D. K. Corn	Mrs. C. R. Corn	V. C. Fisher
1939	Little Creek	D. K. Corn	Mrs. C. R. Corn	N. H. Griffin
1940	Beech Glen	R. L. Moore	Mrs. C. R. Corn	F. W. Morgan
1941	Laurel Branch	V. C. Fisher	Mrs. C. R. Corn	W. B. Sprinkle
1942	Marshall	A. D. Childress	Mrs. C. R. Corn	W. L. Lynch
1943	Mars Hill	William Worley	Mrs. C. R. Com	J. J. Buckner
1944	Forks of Ivy	J. J. Buckner	Mrs. C. R. Corn	Henry Melton *
1945	Upper Laurel	J. J. Buckner	Mrs. C. R. Corn	V. C. Fisher
1946	Locust Grove	John R. Link	Mrs. C. R. Corn	F. W. Morgan
1947	Enon	N. H. Griffin	Mrs. C. R. Corn	Llond Ponder
1948	Big Laurel	N. H. Griffin	Fred Jarvis	A. K. Cheek
1949	Calvary	Wade Huey	Mrs. Geo. Peek	Joe Sprinkle
				Lloyd Ponder
1950	Rice Creek	Wade Huey	Mrs Cory Wallin	N. H. Griffin
				V. C. Fisher
1951	Alexander	Wade Huey	Mrs. Cory Wallin	Carl Burrell

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
	Walnut			P. L. McMahan
1952	Mt. Sheba	Wade Huey	Mrs. Cory Wallin	J. W. Teague
	Madison Seminary			
1953	California Creek	J. W. Teague	Mrs. Cory Wallin	L. F. Sodeman
	Walnut Creek			Joe Sprinkle
1954	Mars Hill	Wade Huey	Mrs. Charles Carter	W. B. Sprinkle
	Davis Chapel			E. J. Hall
1955	Enon	Wade Huey	Mrs. Charles Carter	D. D. Gross
	Beech Glen			Lester Crayton
1956	Mars Hill	Paul Tugman	Mrs. L. Crayton	Glenn Whitley
	Piney Mountain			Dr. Robert Seymour
	Oak Grove			
1957	Bethel	Paul Tugman	Kenneth Buckner	Lester Edwards
	Walnut			J. A. McLeod
	Bull Creek			
1958	Middle Fork	Ralph Hogan	Kenneth Buckner	Lloyd Ponder
	Upper Laurel			William Able
	Forks of Ivy			
1959	Locust Grove	Wade Huey	Kenneth Buckner	N. H. Griffin
	Enon			J. J. Slagle
	Gabriels Creek			
1960	Long Branch	Wade Huey	Frances Elkins	W. F. Russel
	Grandview			Ebb Jenkins
	Upper Laurel			
1961	Piney Mountain	Wade Huey	Frances Elkins	Orlando Hawkins
	Hot Springs			Bobby Seagroves
	Alexander			
1962	Davis Chapel	Wade Huey	Frances Elkins	Ray Hooper
	Madison Seminary			Glen Ramsey, Jr.
	Middle Fork			
1963	Mars Hill	Clell Fisher	Noel R. Lykins	Robert Holt
	Paint Gap			R. Konkle
	Marshall			
1964	Walnut Creek	Clell Fisher	Cora Lee Boone	Orlando Hawkins
	Peeks Chapel			Richard Ponder
	Foster Creek			
1965	Ivy Hill	Clell Fisher	Cora Lee Boone	Elbert Jenkins
	Beech Glen			Jack L. Thomas

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
1966	Locust Grove Bull Creek	Clell Fisher	Joe L. Morgan	Willard Coffey Dearn Ammons
1967	Oak Grove Laurel Branch	Robert Holt	Joe L. Morgan	Arthur Ammons Paul Sorrells
1968	Oak Ridge Ivy Hill	Robert Holt	Joe L. Morgan	Fred Jarvis Clell Fisher
1969	Little Creek Enon	Robert Holt	Joe L. Morgan	Ralph Hogan E. J. Hall
1970	Gabriels Creek Madison Seminary	Ralph Hogan	Mrs. C. Clayton	M. H. Kendall Gordon Ball
1971	Mars Hill Piney Mountain	W. L. Lynch	Mrs. C. Clayton	Richard Price Truman Fisher
1972	Mt. Sheba Forks of Ivy	Gordon Ball	Mrs. C. Clayton	Roy Keller Fred Jarvis
1973	Laurel Bend Upper Laurel	Gordon Ball		James Taffer Joe Honeycutt
1974	Paint Gap North Fork	Bruce Phillips	Mrs. L. Murphey	Stanley Peek H. L. Wilson
1975	Chapel Hill Bethel	Bruce Phillips	Mrs. L. Murphey	Spencer LeGrand Homer Tomberlin
1976	Gabriels Creek Belva	Stanley Peek	Mrs. L. Murphey	Charles Rogers Worth Emory
1977	Middle Fork Oak Ridge	Stanley Peek	Mrs. L. Murphey	Gerald Sprinkle Joe Rice
1978	California Creek Piney Mountain	Stanley Peek	Mrs. L. Murphey	Orlando Hawkins Clell Fisher
1979	Walnut Calvary	Owen Fish	Mrs. L. Murphey	James Buckner Ron Bryan
1980	Hopewell Long Branch	Owen Fish	Barbara Cutshall	Guy Sluder Andrew Grindstaff
1981	Trinity Marshall	Sibbald Lambert	Mrs. Roger Slagle	David Allman Claude Surrett
1982	Ivy Hill Madison Seminary	Sibbald Lambert	Mrs. C. Clayton	Jimmie Buckner Ralph Hogan
1983	Mount Sheba Peek's Chapel	Sibbald Lambert	Mrs. C. Clayton	Worth Emory Charles Rogers
1984	Locust Grove Bull Creek	Sibbald Lambert	Mrs. C. Clayton	Charles Freeman E. M. Petit

Date	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Preacher
1985	Alexander Hot Springs, First	Worth Emory	Mrs. C. Clayton	Paul Silver Troy Rogers
1986	Mars Hill Belva	Buddy Freeman	Mrs. C. Clayton	H. L. Wilson E. S. Morgan
1987	Gabriels Creek Enon	John Campbell	Mrs. C. Clayton	Stanley Peek Glen Burrell
1988	Oak Grove North Fork	H. L. Wilson	Mrs. C. Clayton	Gene Hall Junior Hensley
1989	California Creek Bethel	Dean Grindstaff	Mrs. C. Clayton	Garland Hendrix Stanley Peek
1990	Oak Ridge Middle Fork	Dean Grindstaff	Mrs. C. Clayton	Billy Murray Steve Honeycutt
1991	Marshall, First Beech Glen	Paul Silver	Mrs. C. Clayton	Dean Grindstaff Jerry Wilson
1992	Calvary Forks of Ivy	Walter Ponder	Mrs. C. Clayton	Bruce Buckner Jerry Shelton
1993	Upper Laurel Long Branch	Walter Ponder	Mrs. C. Clayton	Tommy Lipe Arlan Bullman
1994	Piney Mountain Alexander	Stanley Peek	Mrs. C. Clayton	Keith Edwards Manson Warren

* Appointed

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Directors of Missions Past and Present

DAVID B. ROBERTS

David Benjamin Roberts was born on July 22, 1904, in the Brushy Mountains of Caldwell County, North Carolina. He was the youngest of six children, four girls and two boys. His family was very poor and were not able to give the new baby the proper food nor the needed medical attention. His mother died when he was one year old, and a short time later his father remarried and the children were forced to leave and take care of themselves. His thirteen year old sister became the mother and father for the family of six. After a series of encounters with a number of childhood diseases, including whooping cough and measles, David's spine was drawn up and he became a permanent cripple, and almost blind.

At the age of nine he attended his first school, a

private school conducted by a retired Methodist minister. In the fall of that year he entered a public school at Caroleen. His great problem was near blindness; he could not read anything further than four or five inches from his face. He memorized materials and at test time fellow students copied the questions from the board and gave them to him. Many people thought he should not try to go to school at all, but David thought otherwise. He finished Boiling Springs High School with good grades and in the fall of 1926 entered Wake Forest College. In 1929 he was graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He then attended the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, from which he received a degree in theology in 1931. His motto, "I'll find a way or make a way" had carried him through school, and his intelligence and determination were to be his strength through a very useful life.

His interest in religion began after his sister married Walter Wilson (with the understanding that he would take David as his son and raise him). Wilson was active in church and made sure David attended Sunday School and worship services. At the age of eleven David gave his heart to Christ. After he finished the eighth grade, at age 17, he felt the call to preach but resisted because of his physical handicap, and because he feared he would never be able to afford the necessary education. After an intense struggle within himself he finally promised God he would do the best he could.

After graduating from the seminary he accepted an invitation to preach one Sunday at Alexander Baptist Church near Forest City, N. C. He then was

asked to conduct a series of revivals at Green Hill Baptist Church in Rutherford County. From that time on he stayed busy with revivals and serving as interim pastor for churches in Caroleen, Avondale, and Cliffside.

As his first full time job, he accepted an invitation to teach grades three through seven at the Caroleen Elementary School (in Rutherford County). His love for the children and their love for him made him a successful teacher. When the county expanded its schools to include the twelfth grade, Roberts was transferred to Tri High School and later to Cliffside High School.

Meanwhile, he met Joan Wilford Alexander of Stony Point and in 1940 they were married. Three years later they had their only child, Clyde Benjamin. Wilford was to be his strong and devoted companion and assistant for the rest of his life. She was "his eyes", helping him with his reading and preparations for their ministries, and always serving as his driver.

While he was still teaching at Cliffside a pulpit committee from Tuckaseege Baptist Church near Mount Holly, N.C. invited him to serve their church as pastor. It was from this ministry that he came to serve as Association Missionary for the French Broad in 1946. An account of his work in this field is given in the preceding history, but as a summary statement it should be said that he molded 44 scattered, mostly small and weak, churches into a strong Association. Most of the people in the area were proud and independent, and resistant to change. They were suspicious of outsiders; in 1946 more than half of the churches refused to even let

outsiders speak. They were also suspicious of education and many of the churches refused to have musical instruments for their services. Roberts wisely evaluated the situation and moved cautiously, first of all trying to sell himself to the people. He and Mrs. Roberts visited every church and asked them for advice about any changes in the program. His physical handicap helped him win these wary people. They opened their hearts to the little man who could barely see over the pulpit, and when he spoke they listened.

Roberts served the Association twenty-three years. In the fall of 1969, due to declining health, he presented his resignation. After suffering from a severe case of pneumonia he died in St. Joseph's Hospital in Asheville on February 23, 1976.

E. J. JENKINS

The Reverend E. J. Jenkins was born in Asheville, N. C. on September 17, 1923. He is married to Edith Holt who grew up on the Biltmore Estate where her father worked as a husbandman. Jenkins met her when as a young man he got a job on the Estate.

Jenkins had his first significant religious experiences in the West Asheville Presbyterian Church as a lad of twelve years. His family did not attend church but a young Sunday School teacher from the West Asheville church invited him to attend his Sunday School class. As an intermediate in that church he gave his heart to Christ. Soon afterwards the Reverend Perry Sprinkle, pastor of Craven Street Baptist Church, invited him to attend

services with him. In time he was baptized into full membership of the church. At the age of 17 he felt the call to preach. Craven Street Church licensed him, and then ordained him for the ministry.

Jenkins attended the public schools in Asheville and was graduated from Asheville High School. He attended Mars Hill College for two years and then transferred to Carson-Newman College. He was graduated from this school in 1949. Looking back over those years Jenkins recalls with deep gratitude his acceptance as a student and the real "education" a number of teachers and administrators at Mars Hill, also a number of older men at local churches, gave him as a struggling ministerial student. Among those he remembers so well were Dr. Hoyt Blackwell, Dean R. M. Lee, Harvey ("Pop") Lance, Bryan Wallin, George Bryant, Grant McDaris, and Claxton Corn. Whatever he has achieved in life, he says, he owes to them.

While he was attending Mars Hill College he preached in many of the local churches, and while he was at Carson-Newman he served as pastor of a church in New Market, Tennessee. Following his graduation from Carson-Newman he carried on evangelistic work, holding camps in different communities throughout the region. He then bought a tent and opened a church on the Biltmore Estate, and served as its pastor for four year. The ministry at the new church included Sunday School, Training Union, and preaching services. He continued this work until he was called as pastor for Madison Seminary Church in the French Broad Association.

From this church Jenkins went to Ashe County

to serve as Director of Missions. His special assigned task in that association was to start "Evergreen Sunday Schools" (schools that operated twelve months of the year). He also started Daily Vacation Bible Schools in every church.

After three years in Ashe County Jenkins was called as Director of Missions in Wilkes County, where he served one year. From there he went to work for the Home Mission Board as a church starter in Idaho. For fourteen years he worked in this frontier mission field. He and Mrs. Jenkins personally started seventeen churches and the mission team all together started 132 churches. During the time he helped organize six associations and one state convention.

He returned to Madison County during the early 1940's. He was active in the French Broad Association, serving under David Roberts as chairman of the newly established Evangelism Committee. When Roberts' declining health led to his resignation as Director of Missions, Jenkins was elected to fill the vacancy. The account of his ministry for fourteen years in the French Broad, as told in the accompanying history, reveals the strengths and dedication of a committed servant.

In 1983 he left the Association to become director of Camp Bear Walla near Hendersonville. In more recent years he returned to Madison County to accept the pastorate of Trinity Baptist Church.

R. DALE FISHER

Roger Dale Fisher was born in Asheville, North Carolina on April 4, 1952 to J. Frank and Ruth B.

Fisher, who are natives of Madison County. The family lived in Marshall and Asheville during Dale's development years.

He is a 1970 graduate of Clyde A. Erwin High School in Asheville. In 1974, Dale completed his studies at Mars Hill College and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. Being called into the Gospel Ministry while at Mars Hill, he continued his education in Fort Worth, Texas as a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1977, the School of Theology at Southwestern conferred upon him a Master of Divinity Degree.

In a quest to understand more about Bible lands, he travelled on a tour in 1974 to the countries of Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. As a pastor and director of missions, he has taken special courses to further his training at Furman University, the Baptist Sunday School Board, the Home Mission Board and numerous other locations.

In June 1961, Dale experienced the "new birth" during Vacation Bible School at the Victory Baptist Church in Asheville. The church licensed him to the Gospel Ministry in August 1972. The B. H. Carroll Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas ordained him as a Baptist Deacon in February, 1977. In November 1978, he was ordained into the Gospel Ministry by the Calvary Baptist Church in Asheville.

During college and seminary days, he served part-time as Assistant Pastor for the Oakley Baptist Church in Asheville (1973-75), as Associate Pastor of the Victory Baptist Church in Asheville

(1976) and as Director for Outreach Ministries for the B. H. Carroll Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas (1974-76). These part-time positions helped greatly to prepare him for the vocational work he would be called to do later.

Following his graduation from the seminary, the Calvary Baptist Church in Asheville called him to serve as Minister of Religious Education (1977-78), which was his first full-time position. In 1978 the Enka Baptist Church near Asheville called him to serve as their Pastor.

In 1983 he accepted the call to serve as Director of Missions for the French Broad Association. His experiences working in the Buncombe Association gave him a good background for this new work. During his days with the Association, a much needed and long desired Baptist Center was started and nearly completed before he was called to serve the Caldwell Baptist Association in Caldwell County, North Carolina. He began his ministry as Director of Missions with this Association on April 1, 1986 and continues to serve there as of this writing.

Dale has been an active and longstanding member of the North Carolina Director of Missions Conference, the Southern Baptist Conference for Directors of Associational Missions, the Lenoir Ministerial Association, and the Caldwell County Child Advocacy Council. In addition, he has served as a trustee for the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes (1989-1992) and taught a special course on associational missions at the Fruitland Baptist Institute in Hendersonville, North Carolina (1984-1992).

JOE R. EDWARDS

Joe Ronald Edwards was born on October 14, 1933 in Lavonia, Georgia. He is married to Louise Waters of Denver, N. C., and they have two daughters, Donna (Mrs. Rae Pendleton) and Debra (Mrs. Wesley Jones) and four grandchildren.

He attended local public schools and was graduated from Parker High School in Greenville, S. C. in 1952. For his advance studies he attended Gardner-Webb College, Boiling Springs, N. C., where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion in 1975. In 1977 he completed a Basic Quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at the School of Pastoral Care at the N. C. Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. Between 1980-1982 he attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and in 1985-1986 he took the MasterLife I and MasterLife II Leadership Training.

In 1950, at the age of 17, Edwards gave his heart to Christ and was baptized in his home church in Lavonia, Georgia. In 1951 he was called into the Armed Services and he chose the U. S. Air Force in which he served 20 years, 1952-1972. He retired in 1972 with the rank of Master Sergeant. He was a Communication Superintendent during the Korean War.

Though serving in the armed forces, Edwards did not forget his Christian commitment. While his unit was stationed in Hawaii, he attended the Pearl Harbor Baptist Church, where he served as deacon and youth worker. After his return to the States he attended churches wherever he was stationed. In 1966-1967 he served as deacon in Spinning Road

Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, and in 1970-1971 he served as a deacon in the Northside Baptist Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado. This church licensed him to preach and he served it as Associate Pastor for one year. In 1972 he was ordained to the ministry by the Highland Home Baptist Church in Rotan, Texas. He served this church as Student Pastor in 1972-1973.

In 1974 Edwards returned to North Carolina to accept the pastorate of Pisgah Baptist Church in Casar, North Carolina. In 1978 he gave up that ministry to accept an invitation to serve as Director of Missions for the South Mountain Baptist Association (Vale, North Carolina). After three years with this work, he accepted the pastorate of Lattimore Baptist Church in Lattimore, North Carolina. It was from this position that he came to work with the French Broad Association in 1986.

His special training in pastoral care and his successful experiences as a leader of churches made him a good candidate for other ministries. In 1978 he was asked to serve on the Cleveland County Hospital Chaplain's Advisory Board. In 1979-1981 he was a member of Gardner-Webb College Ministerial Board of Associates. In 1983-1986 he served as Associate Chaplain for Cleveland Memorial Hospital in Shelby, North Carolina. In 1985-1986 he served as Vice-President/Program Chairman for the King's Mountain Baptist Association Pastors' Conference; in 1986 he was elected president of the conference. From 1990 to the present he has been a member of Gardner-Webb Ministerial Board of Associates.

Since Edwards left the French Broad Associa-

tion in 1992, he has served as Chaplain/Aftercant director of Lutz-Austell Funeral Home in Shelby, North Carolina.

His hobbies are fishing and woodwork.

TROY ROGERS

The Reverend Troy Rogers was born and reared in Buncombe County. He grew up in the New Found Baptist Church in the Leicester area. He became a christian at the age of thirteen and responded to a call to the ministry at sixteen. He was licensed to preach by his home church.

He attended local public schools and was graduated from North Buncombe High School. To further prepare himself for the ministry he attended Fruitland Bible Institute, from which he received an Associate degree of Religion/Church Ministries. He continued his education at Luther Rice Bible College in Florida and Mid-Atlantic Bible College, where he earned the Bachelor of Arts Degree. He then earned a Master of Divinity Degree and a Doctor of Ministry Degree at Mid-Atlantic Seminary. Meanwhile, he also earned 250 hours of church study course credits through the Sunday School Board, and attended several Seminary Extension courses.

Rogers married Margaret Louise Maynard of Weaverville and they have two sons, Terry Joe and Kevin Douglas.

During the early years of his ministry Rogers served a number of churches as a bivocational pastor, including Longs Chapel Baptist in Weaverville, Paynes Chapel in Marshall, and Little

Creek Baptist in Mars Hill. He was ordained by the Longs Chapel Church.

Rogers assumed his first full time pastorate at Cross Roads Baptist Church in Ruby, South Carolina. His ministry there brought significant growth in church membership, the improvement of church facilities, and an expanded church program. Under his leadership the congregation renovated its sanctuary and built a fellowship hall—and with no indebtedness. He led the church in writing a new constitution and by-laws, and in developing a deacon family ministry. During his term the church increased its giving to the Association and to the Cooperative Program to 17 percent of its total budget.

In 1984 Rogers accepted a call to serve Bethel Baptist Church in the Mars Hill area. Here he repeated the work he had done at Cross Roads. He led the congregation in a visitation and outreach effort that resulted in steady church growth. He led them to set up a church council to coordinate all activities, also to write a constitution and by-laws. Under his leadership mission groups (WMU) were organized for all age groups. These organizations achieved the standard, "Distinguished", for several straight years. He put the Cooperative Program in the church budget for the first time and saw giving to the Cooperative Program and to Association, Home, Foreign, and State Missions triple and quadruple. He also led the church to begin a building fund for future needs.

Rogers was also active in the Association, both the Chesterfield Association in South Carolina and the French Broad in Madison County, North Caro-

lina. He held offices and memberships on key committees in both. He was serving as Moderator for the French Broad when he was elected Director of Missions for that body on April 11, 1991.

During the years Rogers participated personally in a number of mission projects. He helped build a church on an Indian Reservation in Phoenix, Arizona, a mission church in Rico Rica in Mexico, and a Seaman's Center in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1992 he went with a team to Brazil to construct a chapel in Santo Rita Do Par Do.

When he has spare time Rogers is a good machinist and photographer, and he likes to hunt and fish.

13

Member Churches

Date of Membership in the French Broad Association

Alexander - 1950	Little Ivy - 1807
Arrington Branch - 1932	Locust Grove - 1897
Bear Creek - 1994	Long Branch - 1901
Beech Glen - 1935	Lower Big Pine - 1994
Belva - 1972	Lusk Chapel - 1994
Bethel - 1869	Madison Seminary - 1890
Big Laurel - 1844	Mars Hill - 1856
Bull Creek - 1818	Marshall - 1830-1865; 1878
California Creek - 1869	Middle Fork - Before 1823-1827; 1850
Calvary - 1945	Mount Pleasant - 1830
Caney Fork - 1994	Mount Sheba - 1936
Chapel Hill - 1926	North Fork - 1959
Davis Chapel - 1915	Oak Grove - 1940
Easter Gap - 1990	Oak Hill - 1939
Enon - 1917	Oak Ridge - 1918

Forks of Ivy - 1860-1894; 1928	Paint Fork - 1902
Gabriels Creek - 1850	Paint Gap - 1869
Grandview - 1903	Paynes Chapel - 1994
Grapevine - 1864	Peek's Chapel - 1900
Hopewell - 1917-1932; 1972	Piney Grove - 1952
Hot Springs - 1921-1932; 1957	Piney Mountain - 1903
Ivy Hill - 1917	Redmon - 1994
Jones Valley - 1994	Trinity - 1957
Laurel Bend - 1929	Union Valley - 1891
Laurel Branch - c.1873	Upper Laurel - 1853
Laurel Chapel - 1929	Upper Rice Creek - 1925
Laurel Valley - 1925	Walnut - 1853
Liberty - 1994	Walnut Creek - Before 1830
Little Creek - 1875	Zion - 1994

❖ Alexander Baptist Church ❖



A group of people from the Alexander community met on January 28, 1947, for the purpose of organizing a Missionary Baptist church. They had met and discussed the organization of a church several times making it an earnest prayer. Rev. Troy Israel was elected as temporary moderator. The group discussed why a church should be organized and a committee of ministers and deacons from another church, knowing the need for the church, recommended the organization of a Missionary Baptist Church. They were: Rev. C.L. Ball, Rev. Troy Israel, Rev. Hoyal Penland, Rev. Joe Honeycutt, Sr. Rev. Nelson Luther, and Deacons Zeb Briggs and Harry Stewart.

It was then moved, seconded and passed that a church be organized. The church covenant was read and also the declaration of faith.

Eleven letters from other churches of the same faith and order were read, voted on and approved by the committee of ministers and deacons, declaring themselves a church. It was also moved, seconded and approved that the newly organized church be named the Alexander Missionary Baptist Church. Charter members are: Grady Green, Junior Green, Will Parris, Conley "London" Parris, Troy Haney, Nettie Haney, Dennis Parris, Rhea Parris, Ethel Parker, Weldon Ball and Helen Ball.

The door of the church was opened to receive members and others joined, officers were elected to serve the church for a year. They were: Pastor - Rev. Troy Israel, Clerk - Ethel Parker, Treasurer - Rhea Parris, Organists - Lillian Redmon & Annie Mae Parris. Brothers Grady Green and Troy Haney were set aside for deacons.

A plot of land was given by Mr. & Mrs. Troy Haney to build a church. Services were held in the Oak Grove Methodist Church until the Alexander Baptist Church was completed in August of 1947 and dedicated. Due to the fast growth of the church three more classrooms and two baths were added in 1959. The church bought land from Mr. & Mrs Troy Haney in 1955 in order to have a cemetery.

In 1964 the parsonage was built, also a baptismal was installed in the church this same year. A pool mural was painted in 1965 and the parking area was paved. In 1973 the church fellowship building was erected, including more classrooms and 2 baths, and the walkway from the church to the fellowship building was paved and covered.

New pews and cushions were purchased in 1977 for the sanctuary and the clear windows were

replaced with stained glass windows in all the church. Shrubbery was planted and in 1985 a storage building was erected.

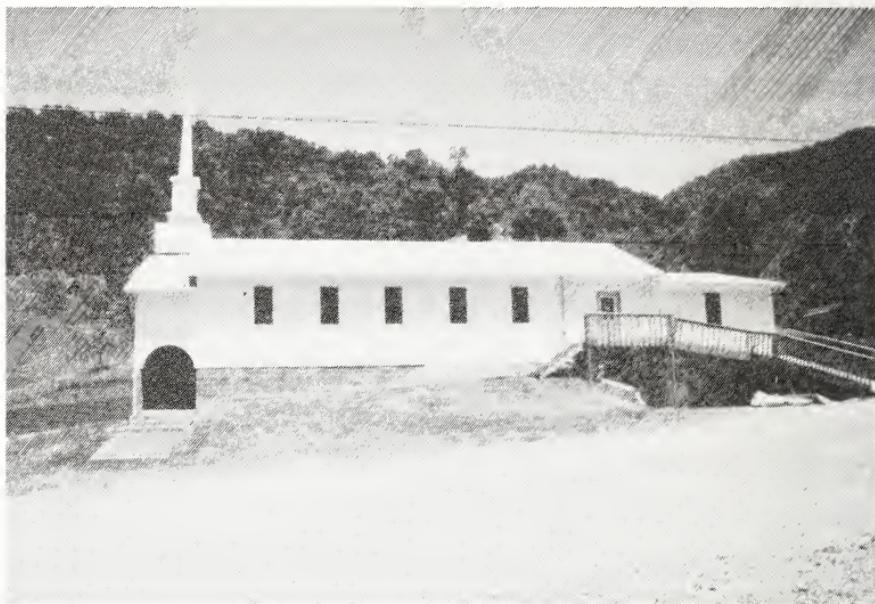
Alexander Baptist Church joined the French Broad Association early in its history and is still a member. Alexander contributed to the building of the new associational building.

Through the years many souls have been saved, the Lord's name exalted, and hearts have been made to rejoice. Several ministers have been ordained, as well as deacons, and are carrying on the work of the Lord here and at other churches. Alexander Baptist has worked with other churches on behalf of the Lord's work and reached out to many of the needy here and away. Some of its members have gone to other states to help build churches and help the brethren.

The church is known for its gospel music ministry. Besides the church choir, directed by Dennis Parris, there are different quartets, duets, solos and a youth choir. The second Sunday night singing convention has been a church event since its organization.

Vacation Bible School is also a yearly event with many youth and adults from the community attending.

❖ Arrington Branch Baptist Church ❖



In the early 1900's, there were many people that didn't have transportation to church or other places. Some people had to walk as much as five miles and carry small children in order to attend Grapevine Baptist Church, which was the closest church in the community. Some people started meeting for church services in a small log building located on the property of Reagan Coates. The congregation kept growing and the people decided to build a church that would be closer to the homes on Arrington Branch Road.

Property was donated by Reagan Coates. Property owners in the community donated the logs and the building materials and the men built the church at its present site. Twenty-one men and twenty-one women made their request to be dismissed from Grapevine Church for the purpose of organiz-

ing and establishing a Missionary Baptist Church. This was done by order of the Grapevine Church on June 25, 1932.

The people met on July 16, 1932, to organize the church. The church covenant was read and then a business session was held. The church was given the name Arrington Branch Baptist Church and was announced as a church. Trustees were then elected. Articles of Faith, as listed in the church manual were adopted. Then they voted to join the French Broad Baptist Association.

The first pastor elected on August 6, 1932, was C.C. Bullman. The first donation for him was \$1.00. Sunday School was begun at this time.

The church grew steadily with new members coming by letter and baptism almost every month. The church had Saturday afternoon services and Sunday morning services the first Sunday every month. The pastors didn't live in the community, and most didn't own an automobile, so someone brought them into the community on Saturday. He then spent the night with a church member and was taken home after Sunday services for lunch with some family from the church.

Revivals usually lasted for at least two weeks. There were 11 AM services each day and night services also. The pastor and the evangelist would stay day and night with families in the community. The teachers from Grapevine Elementary would bring the school children to the day services. Several children were saved at these services.

In the early 50's the offering for the pastor ranged from \$3.00 to \$16.00. The members have increased the salary steadily through the years. In

March 1960 a weekly salary of \$60.00 was paid to the pastor, in 1983 it was increased to \$100.00, in 1984 to \$200.00 and in 1990 to \$250.00. Many faithful men have served the church with the present pastor being Harold Ray. Special offerings have been given to the Association, the Gideons, and the prison ministry.

Special services consisting of communion and footwashing have been held, where the men washed each others feet and the women did the same.

Music has been an important part of the worship in the services. In 1961 the church had a "Little Quartet" consisting of four small children. Singing schools have been held to teach people, there have been monthly singings, a youth choir and groups from other churches coming to sing.

In September of 1984, the church started sending a monthly support of \$50.00 to missionary Rev. Pat Roberts of Pensacola, Florida.

Many additions and improvements have been made through the years. A piano was purchased in August 1969, classrooms added in 1974, electric heat was installed in January of 1975. The porch and steps were poured with cement, with hand railings added around the porch and steps. New lights were installed in 1977. In 1978 restrooms and basement classrooms were added. A church steeple was put in place in 1985 and a fellowship hall was completed in 1990. Extensions on both sides of the church began in May of 1992.

Two men have been licensed and ordained by the church to preach the gospel. These are Kenneth Parker, who was ordained in May of 1975, and Ronnie Shelton in 1983.

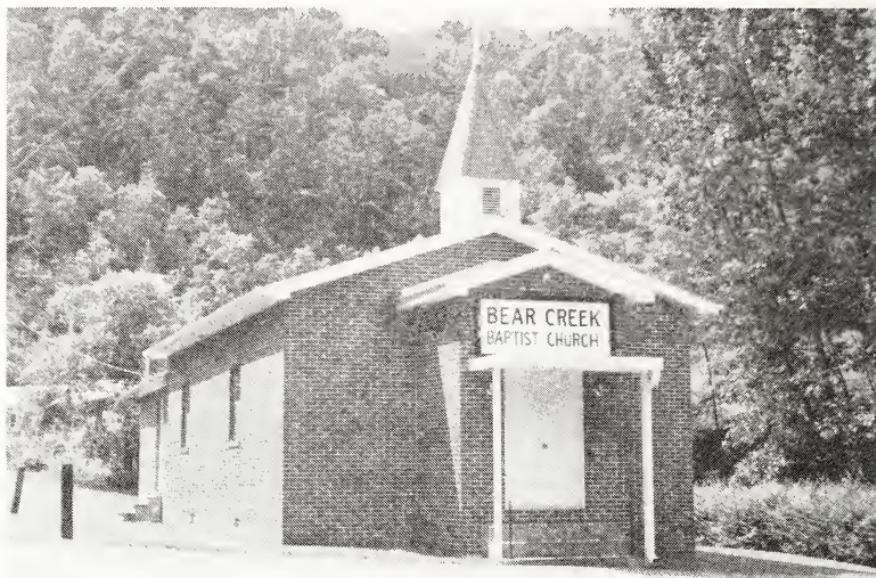
Other activities held by the church have included revivals, Bible School, homecoming and decorations, sunrise services and Christmas programs.

At a baptismal service being held by the church in November 1982, author and photographer Tim Barnwell attended. He made photographs that were to be included in a book titled *The Heritage of Madison County*.

Membership has continued upward through the years, starting with 42 in 1932 until the present membership of 238.

Each of the charter members has been a very special person, a good example in their Christian life, and very devoted to the Lord and the church. Fifteen of these members are still living. Several of these live in the church community and others live in surrounding states.

❖ Bear Creek Baptist Church ❖



Bear Creek Baptist Church was organized in February 1905 by Rev. P.T. McAfee and Rev. William Early, being so named because it is situated on the waters of Bear Creek from the surrounding country one time being almost a wilderness with plenty of bears. The church is about five miles west of Marshall, N.C.

The building was a one-room school which was bought from Madison County Board of Education August 11, 1967.

The church was organized with eleven charter members and four deacons. Services were held on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Rev. William Early was the first pastor, some of the other pastors through the years are: Revs. P.T. McAfee, Cecil Reese, T.J. Graham, Nate Martin, Bergan Robinson, C.A. Worley, Vaughn C. Fisher, Kimsey Ball, Luke

Griffin, John William Goforth, Coleman Caldwell, Chester Fisher, Jeter Sherlin, Jack Davis, James L. Buckner, Martin Fisher, Gary Fender, and Robert Hawkins. Rev. Bruce Buckner is the present pastor with forty-five members.

April 1968 the church was moved twelve feet away from the road so the road could be widened and paved.

May 1969 the church was bricked.

October 1980 classrooms were built on and bricked.

Other improvements between 1979 and 1985 are: Carpet, New Pews, New Furniture, Furnace, and Air Conditioning.

May 1985 the parking lot was paved.

The church was first a member of Newfound Association which was dissolved in 1993. The church then joined French Broad Association, January 23, 1994.

❖ Beech Glen Baptist Church ❖



The movement to build a church in the Beech Glen area grew out of a tent revival which lasted four weeks and was held by Dr. Robert Wyatt on the campus of Beech Glen High School, Ivy, North Carolina.

Dr. Wyatt became the first pastor after the organization of the church in October, 1934. Until the present structure was erected, service was held in the afternoon so people from other churches could attend.

The plot of land where the church now stands was donated by Ida and Ellis Robinson and Minerva and Bill Metcalf. Dr. Oscar E. Sams, second pastor of the church, submitted the plans for the church building. The men of the community donated a lot of the materials and did much of the work themselves. Friends and relatives assisted in every way

they could. It was truly a community project. Joe Sar Ponder was foreman over the rock work and laid the first rock. "Uncle Lee" Sams was great at collecting money and keeping the project moving along.

The first services were held in the church in 1937. Donated seats were used until trees, which were given by individuals, could be sawed into lumber for new pews. The dedication was held the second Sunday in May, 1938. At this time there were approximately one hundred twenty-six members. The sermon was preached by Dr. Hoyt Blackwell, pastor of Marshall Baptist Church. Dinner was served on tables outside. The afternoon was devoted to singing and extemporaneous talks. Special music was presented by Mount Olive Baptist Church of Mars Hill and the following quartets: Jamerson, Tomberlin, Haynes and others.

The first deacons of the church were Lee Sams, Tom Brigman, Asbury Jamerson, Oscar Young, Bill Metcalf, Kenneth Buckner and Dewey Rice.

Officers of the church before and at the time of the Dedication were: Sunday School Superintendent—J.V. Howell, Assistant—"Uncle Lee" Sams; First Church Clerk—Bill Metcalf; First Church Treasurer—R.O. Young; Sunday School Secretary-Treasurer—Kermit Buckner, Assistant—Frank McIntosh; Music Director—Asbury Jamerson; Pianist—Mrs. Oscar Young, Assistant—Mrs. Bill Metcalf; First Custodian—Willard Anderson; First B.Y.P.U. President—Mrs. J.V. Howell; Second R.Y.P.U President—Kyle Jamerson.

The following pastors and their dedicated wives

have served our church well and we praise God for them: Dr. Robert Wyatt, Dr. Oscar Sams, Rev. Hobert Rogers, Rev. Jim Corn, Rev. Glenn Callahan, Rev. Howard Ringer, Rev. Seth Perkinson, Rev. Lester Crayton, Rev. Lyman Rich (served three times), Rev. Glen Whitley, Rev. Lee Roy Williams, Rev. Bascombe Hensley, Rev. Paul Morrow, Rev. Dearl Ammons, Rev. William Snyder(Interim), Rev. E.J. Jenkins (Interim), Rev. Stanley Peek and Rev. Farrell Ramsey, Youth Pastor.

In recent years, the church has grown so much that additional parking space was needed. The church was able to purchase property from Chris Maney on November 23, 1987. Individuals gave money to pay for loads of dirt to fill up the lot. Later the lot was paved. Another boundary joining the church was purchased on October 4, 1989, from the Madison County Board of Education, to be used as additional parking space.

The DeWeese family gave the church a cemetery on November 14, 1989. Two sunrise services have been held there.

In 1991 Mrs. Coye Jamerson was honored for having served as church Clerk and treasurer for close to fifty years.

Beech Glen has truly become a Missions-Minded Church that supports State Missions, Associational Missions, Home and Foreign Missions, the Baptist Children's Home, the Baptist Retirement Home, the Baptist Hospital and the Cooperative Program. The church also helps to support several missionaries who depend on churches for their support. In addition to the Women's Missionary Union, we have Baptist Young Women, G.A.'s and

Mission Friends. A Spanish Service is held each Sunday evening.

In recent years, much emphasis has been placed on the youth. Bible study groups are held each Wednesday night for the youth as well as the adults. In addition to regular revivals, a youth revival is held each year. As a result the young people have become very active in the church. An overflowing youth choir is enjoyed by all. Many recreational activities are planned for the young. To show their appreciation, the youth give a banquet each year for the senior citizens. The fact that young boys are used as junior ushers helps them realize how important they are to the church. The number of young people as well as adults has grown so much that Rev. Farrell Ramsey was elected as Youth Pastor in December 1990.

In June of 1992 the church started electing young deacons to serve on a rotating basis along with the regular deacons. Another young man, Kevin Edwards, went to Brazil to help build a church in 1992. In July 1993 Sherri and Dwayne Lewis went to Rogerson, Idaho, to hold a Bible School. We are very proud of our young people.

Even though many improvements have been made and much pride has been taken in the upkeep of the church throughout our history, we have never lost sight of our true mission—the salvation of lost souls. This has been accomplished by the preached Word, prayer, helping those in need, and home and hospital visitation. May it ever be so.

MY CHURCH — BEECH GLEN

*The loveliest place in all the world,
Stands surrounded by a number of trees.
Its architecture of different shaped rocks,
Is lovely for the eyes to see.
Shrubbery and flowers take their place of beauty.
A curved sidewalk adds to it too.
People like to go there to worship,
Because that adds to it too.
A look at the inside makes me humble,
To see its beautiful walls.
The sanctuary's lovely decorations,
Makes me think that God made them all.*

Mrs. Coye Jamerson

❖ Belva Baptist Church ❖



For years the people of Belva community have felt the need of a church in this community. The

very beginning of the Sunday School in Belva started in 1942 under the pines on the hill across from Mrs. Claudia Cook's. The following year Mr. William Fiedler came from New Jersey to Belva and started holding services in his home. Later he moved to a little building out near Mr. Winston Cook's house.

The people wanted a building in which to worship which was God's house. It was decided to find a location and build a church. Winston Cook gave the property by the creek. God provided the way to build a small one-room church building. The people of the community were very proud and thankful when they finally completed the church building in 1951. On September 28 of that year the Dedication Service was held. From that time until 1972 there were several pastors to serve the church. Everyone commented on the lack of space and the need for classrooms, but no one seemed to have the faith to undertake expanding the building.

In the spring of 1972 God sent Gordon Ball to Belva to fill in since we did not have a pastor. On July 23, 1972, an organizational meeting was held to make Belva Baptist Mission into an organized Baptist Church. Rev. E.J. Jenkins, Superintendent of Missions stated the purpose of the meeting and the need of an organized Baptist Church in this community. Owen Fish and Gordon Ball presented the Articles of Faith drawn up by a group of people of the church and Mr. Ball, and they were adopted by the group. The decision when voted upon was affirmative for the church to be organized.

Those uniting with the Church at that time were the following people: Gertrude Thomas, Lois

Ramsey, Owen Fish, Carolyn Fish, Gayle Gahagan, Elizabeth Barnett, Laura Cook, Christine Franklin, Edwin Ramsey and Stella Gahagan. The members had their first business meeting immediately following the organizational meeting and elected Rev. Gordon Ball as Pastor, Owen Fish Superintendent of Sunday School, Stella Gahagan Church Clerk and Gayle Gahagan Secretary and Treasurer.

At a meeting the repairing of the church building was discussed and the possibilities of building a new building. A vote was taken to build a new building and was carried. Three committees were elected: 1. The Building Site Committee, 2. A Church Design Committee and 3. The Finance Committee.

In November 1972 the church lot committee made their recommendations. Due to not being able to obtain a deed for the land the church wanted, it was decided to build on the old church property. In March 1974 a vote was taken to accept land where the old church stood and build the new church there.

On December 16th, Walter Gosnell, chairman of the design committee, presented a drawing of the floor plans in the form of a two-part building. It was voted upon and carried. It was agreed that we build the educational building with one section to be used as the auditorium until the main one could be built. Our goal for our new church had been set for \$6,000 by March 1, 1974.

On March 31st, a special meeting was called and altered plans for the new building presented to the people. This plan was a three-part building. This was voted upon and accepted.

During the months of April, May and June, 1974, much was accomplished toward the church building. The men cleared the ground, cut logs and had them sawed into lumber and burned the brush. On Saturday, June 15, 1974, the floor was poured and the work on the building was now in progress. On June 23, 1974, the men held their first Sunday School Class in the new building, held in the office with a polyethylene roof.

By July our building had the roof, walls finished enough to have Bible School in the classrooms. We had no windows nor doors, but a wonderful Bible School was enjoyed. We were fortunate to have a group of fine Christians from the Washington Pike Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee, to help in our Bible School.

The men met every Saturday during these months and worked, sometimes until 12:00 PM, every spare hour was spent working on the church.

The new building was almost a second home for the Pastor Gordon Ball and his wife, Oval. They worked faithfully all day and late hours at night.

By September the windows and doors had been bought and were installed in the new building. The fellowship room was finished first and was used for a temporary auditorium.

On Saturday, October 12, 1974, the men started laying the brick.

The first worship service was held on November 6, 1974, and was highlighted by a communion service.

During the months of February and March, 1975 electric heaters and carpet were purchased and installed in most of the rooms.

On the fifth Saturday in March 1975, the first singing was held in the new church building. The bathrooms have been almost completed, the well dug and our sanctuary was ready for the service.

A lot of pastors said we need more room, and others said a new church will never be built at Belva. As God chose Solomon hundreds of years ago to build the temple, God chose Gordon Ball to come to Belva and be instrumental in building God's house. "Nothing is impossible for God."

❖ **Bethel Baptist Church** ❖



Sometime before September 1868, permission was granted by Middle Fork Church to some individuals to form an arm of that church. On the first Saturday in September 1868, seven individuals met near James M. Duck's home in a house owned by Mr. Duck. Rev. Samuel Willison,

M.D., was elected supply pastor. The location of this house was near the present Polly's Branch Road.

On the next day, the first Sunday in September, 1868, the congregation met at the water and baptized eight individuals into this church arm. Two more individuals joined this body of believers.

On Saturday, October 31, 1868, these individuals adopted the following petition: State of North Carolina, Madison County, October 31, 1868. "We the arm of Middle Fork Church at Ivy Gap petition our mother church at Middle Fork for dismissal as for to constitute a church on Saturday before the first Sabbath in December next. We have 21 members." Signed...Rev. Samuel Willison, M.D., James M. Duck, Clerk.

Petitions also went out to sister churches at Little Ivy, Mars Hill and Middle Fork for ministerial aid to assist in constituting this church and ordaining the deacons. This meeting took place in November 1868 and this body of believers was thus constituted as a church.

Twelve articles of faith and ten articles of decorum were written and adopted. One of the articles of decorum read thus: "Being legally constituted into a church, we therefore agree that the church shall be known by the name of Bethel." Thus Bethel Baptist Church came into existence. The 21 charter members were James M. Duck, James O. Scoggins, James McFadden, Samuel F. Radford, Robert Penley, B.L. Doan, Wesley W. Ponder, Thomas E. Gregory, Margaret E. Duck, Lucinda Duck, Elizabeth Duck, Nancy Taylor, Mary J. McFadden, Marcinia Ponder, Jane Ponder, Martha L. Penley,

Polly Ballard, Sarah Radford, Manda Waldrup, Elizabeth McFadden and L.C. Brinkley.

Bethel Church met at the mouth of Polly's Branch until March 15, 1884. During this period of time, the church had worship services once monthly, usually on Saturday. Communion services were held once a year and sister churches were invited to attend these special services. On July 5, 1875, the church agreed to pay the pastor \$12.50 per year for his services.

There were no meetings of the church from March 15, 1884, until September 19, 1884, probably from the lack of a meeting place. In 1884, the location of the church meetings moved to a house near the mouth of Ponder Creek, back of the Otto Buckner house.

Again from August 4, 1889, to March 21, 1891, there were no meetings of the church probably because of no building to meet in. Minutes from the church on March 21, 1891, stated that the church met in its new church house. This location was near where Randy Ferguson now lives. This building was also used as a school.

Work began in 1914 on our present building and was completed in 1915 at a cost of \$1000. Most of the work was done by members and funds were raised by selling farm products such as eggs, chickens, turkeys and cattle. The membership at this time was at 131; 48 males and 83 females.

Our church bell was bought by three young men at a cost of \$12.00. B.B. Beaver and two Taylor boys from Ponder Creek pledged \$.50 per week from a salary of \$.40 per day to pay for the bell.

Union Hill Freewill Baptist Church near the

mouth of Holland Creek Road ceased to meet about the time our present church was being built and many of its members united with Bethel.

In 1917, Bethel had four ordained ministers in its membership: R.D. Ponder, W.L. Ponder, C.C. Gregory and W.H. Ballard. These four individuals were mightily used of God and did much to evangelize our region of the country.

In 1925, there was a mighty moving of God among the people of Bethel community. A revival meeting lasting longer than four weeks occurred. Rev. Tom J. Eatman was pastor. Different preachers preached in the meeting. R.D. Ponder and S.L. Ponder were two of these. Services were held in the morning, prayer meeting in the afternoon and another service at night. One of the afternoon prayer meetings lasted until people started coming in for the evening service. There were 61 baptisms with 10 more additions by church letter.

The first Vacation Bible School conducted at Bethel was in the summer of 1950. In 1953 and 1954 a new highway was constructed which made it necessary to move our church from facing East to facing West. Classrooms were built at this time under our present building. A furnace was added to the church replacing the pot-belly stove.

In 1954 for the first time in our church history, worship services were held all four Sunday's in the month. That year the church had 33 baptisms.

Bethel hosted the Associational meeting in 1957. In 1958 the Church voted to build a parsonage. In 1960 Bethel's membership was 239.

In 1978 Woman's Missionary Union was begun. In 1981 R.A. and G.A. activities were begun. Bethel

also started a tape ministry for shut-in's during this time.

In 1992 a Discipleship Training program was started; also plans to start a Brotherhood Missions program in July of 1992 were approved.

❖ **Big Laurel Baptist Church** ❖



In May 1844 while this area was still a part of Yancey County, a Presbytery was called upon for the purpose of organizing a Baptist Church on the waters of Laurel Creek.

Elder Robert Patterson was called to be chairman and was later elected to serve as the first pastor of Big Laurel Church.

The abstract of principles and the church covenant were read and recorded. The right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery to Robert Patterson, Luke L. Branson, and William Keith.

After examination Thomas Wallin and James Tweed were ordained as deacons.

At this time 58 members joined the church. The first church clerk elected was Neely Tweed.

The first church was a log building located one and one half miles east of the Big Laurel Post Office. In 1893 a new church was built one quarter of a mile east of the first one, which served also as a school. In May 1937 a new building was built about one mile east of the previous one, which is still the present one.

The church joined the French Broad Baptist Association early in its history and has been a continuous member.

❖ Bull Creek Baptist Church ❖



In the spring of 1818 twenty-seven settlers along the Bull Creek met to form a local church.

The closest one, Little Ivy was eight miles away and caused many hardships to attend. Eleven articles were adopted and the church was named The Church of Christ on Bull Creek. It was located on Bone Camp Road. Rev. Moses Freeman was elected as the first pastor. He stayed until 1830.

In 1830 the church divided and several people left to organize another church. There is no record of that church at this time.

Sunday School was established in 1856. Bull Creek was the third in the Association to have a Sunday School. Bull Creek was the first rural church in the Association to establish a nursery. It also shared first place with Grandview when in 1951 it began a "bus ministry."

A Mission organization started in August of 1899. Later WMU was organized. RA's and GA's were organized and these organizations gave to the church a vision of missions. This vision of missions did not always prevail in Bull Creek. In 1846 a representative was sent to speak on missions, but the pastor, Rev. David Blackwell refused to let him speak. After consultation with the deacons, Mr. Kimsey was allowed to speak, but the pastor knelt and prayed: "Oh Lord, have mercy upon us: What Shall We do! The missionaries are upon us." Many thought the missionary movement was a money scheme. However as the years passed the members caught the vision of missions as the fulfillment of the Great Commission. An offering was taken every three months for the purpose of Foreign Missions, the Orphanage at Thomasville, and State Missions.

In the year 1930 another division occurred

when disagreement surfaced over the use of printed literature for Sunday School from the Southern Baptist Convention, and whether to organize a Baptist Young People's Union. The BYPU was organized and was active until 1990 when it was discontinued.

The church met in the first log structure until 1875 when the church was relocated and a large white frame building was built. In 1830 after the division the building was remodeled. Bull Creek was the first church in the association to have a pastors study, an indoor baptistry and a library.

In 1942-43 a parsonage was erected. It was the third church in the Association to have a parsonage. It still serves as the pastor's residence and is the only one of the original three in use.

In 1949 the congregation approved plans for an upstairs area, new classroom space on the first floor and a change in the front of the church. Many parsonage and church improvements were made over the years.

Mid-week prayer service was started in 1956 and continues at this time.

A new sanctuary was dedicated on October 5, 1975, and the church note burned in 1976.

The logs from the original building were bought in 1981 and moved to the church property where they now stand as a one room-church.

For over 150 years Bull Creek has been a Light on the Hill shining into and through the hearts of people in order to light the path of all who pass their way.

❖ California Creek Baptist Church ❖



In the year 1850, one year after the discovery of gold in California, another California came into existence. At the time Mr. Berry Holcombe decided to move to a new, unsettled beautiful spot at the bend of a small creek. When Mr. Holcombe's neighbors learned that he was going to move, they inquired where his new home was to be. In keeping with the Spirit of the "Forty Niners" he informed them he was going to California. Spoken as a joke, this statement resulted in the name California for this section of Madison County.

After a few years other pioneers followed the example of Mr. Holcombe and sought home in the caves and hollows along the stream.

During the first years these families attended Upper Laurel, Flag Pond and Little Ivy Churches. After a while they started holding services in their

homes and became known as "The Arm of the Mother Church at Upper Laurel."

In May 1869 Upper Laurel was petitioned for a joint letter of dismission to constitute a church. At the same time Flag Pond and Little Ivy were petitioned for letters of dismission for those members wishing to join the new church.

In July the church was organized as California Church. Rules of decorum were read, two deacons were elected and 5 members were elected as delegates to The French Broad Baptist Association.

The first house used as a meeting place was a log structure which was used as a church and schoolhouse. This house was used until 1976, at that time The French Broad Association was scheduled to meet at the church so the members decided a new and better building should be built to house the delegation. In order to build the church, sacrifices in timber, time and money were made by the members. Rev. W.T. Bradley, pastor, went away to teach a writing school and returned the \$15.00 paid him to the church.

The church prospered with revivals held each year and many conversions increased the church membership.

New pews were bought and the building painted and in June 1893 the building was dedicated. This building was used until 1916 and was torn down on Christmas Day. A new building was completed in 1917. Again, the French Broad Baptist Association met in the new building in August.

At sometime the church name was changed to California Creek Baptist Church conforming to the

custom of many churches being named for nearby streams.

The church grew during the early 1920's with Sunday School Training Schools held. In the 1930's a Lord's Acre Plan was adopted. A Young People's Union was organized in 1935.

In 1937 a new state highway was built through the church property and the church had to be moved. It was moved several feet from its original location.

During the 1930's the church suffered financially as a result of the depression. The pastor's salary was meager, and gifts to Missions and Cooperation Programs were low, but there was something in the budget for each.

Beginning in 1936 California Creek called the pastor to full-time preaching service instead of twice a month as was the schedule. Members looked forward to the day when they could have a resident pastor.

Greater prosperity following the war years of the early 1940's made the dream of a pastor's home possible. In 1949 the new parsonage was built. The Rev. C.B. Rogers and his family were the first to enjoy the new pastor's home.

The church continued to grow. WMU, GA's and RA's and other organizations grew, also financial conditions improved and Sunday School rooms were built in August of 1954.

During the years the church was very active in Associational work. In 1960 the church won the Sunday School and Training Union Associational Banners for best attendance.

Some of the contributing factors that have

added to the progress of the church are the WMU organized in the 1930's, the Church Music program, and the Vacation Bible School.

As the church continued to grow the need for a new building became evident. Since no land for expansion or parking could be purchased near the old location, a new one had to be found. Land had been purchased for a cemetery and on a part of this land the new church was to be built.

September 26, 1976, was the last service in the old building, and on October 3, 1976, the first service was held in the new building. On May 22, 1977, a dedication service was held for the new church. Rev. E.J. Jenkins was the guest speaker and Rev. Stanley Peek led the prayer of dedication.

May 3, 1981, a beautiful bell tower was dedicated in loving memory of Donna Rogers. In 1982 a picnic area and building were dedicated to the loving memory of June Sams Cody. In 1989 flags were presented to the church in memory of Ruby Carter Wallin.

California Creek Baptist Church has served the community and association through many years and we pray that we can continue to serve God through our church for many more.

❖ Calvary Baptist Church ❖



In the early 1930's, a group of people from the Banjo Branch and Bruce Road areas of Madison County began holding religious services in various homes throughout the community. While some of these individuals were members of other churches, many did not attend any established congregation.

After a few years attendance grew and the meetings were moved to the Mars Hill High School auditorium in order to accommodate the increasing number of worshipers, which had grown to approximately one hundred people. The meetings were held on Sunday afternoons. Some families attended Mars Hill Baptist Church in the mornings in addition to these afternoon services.

In 1943, a committee was formed to organize the group into a formal church and to select a site to construct a church building. Mr. Jack Buckner,

a ministerial student at Mars Hill College, was called as pastor of the church in May of 1944. In September, 1944, a meeting was held at the home of Clarence and Eula Briggs. Those in attendance passed a resolution to call messengers from the following Baptist churches: Mars Hill, Little Ivy, Bull Creek and Upper Laurel. The messengers were being called in order to form an organizing council to establish a church. The name of the church would be Calvary Baptist.

On October 1, 1944, at Mars Hill School an organizational meeting was held. As a result of this meeting, Calvary Baptist Church was formed. The charter members were: Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Buckner, Mrs. Eva Buckner, Mr. & Mrs. Edger Hall, Reuben Ball and Mrs. Martha Anders.

On October 5, 1944, the following officers were elected: R. Wesley Hunter, church clerk; Kenneth Buckner, Sunday School superintendent and church treasurer; Paul Briggs, Sunday School Secretary; Floyd Sheppard, choir director; Pearl Briggs, pianist.

Kenneth Buckner, from Beech Glen Church, was the first deacon. The board of trustees was comprised of S.B. Riddle, Edger Hall, and Clarence Briggs.

Soon after formal organization of the church, attention was given to securing land and constructing a building. By an unanimous vote, a lot was selected. The lot was a portion of the property of Clarence Briggs on High School Road, presently known as Bailey Street. Clarence Briggs, Paul Briggs, Joe Hall and James Navy were selected to serve on the building committee. It was agreed that

the building would be constructed of field stone, taken from the surrounding mountains.

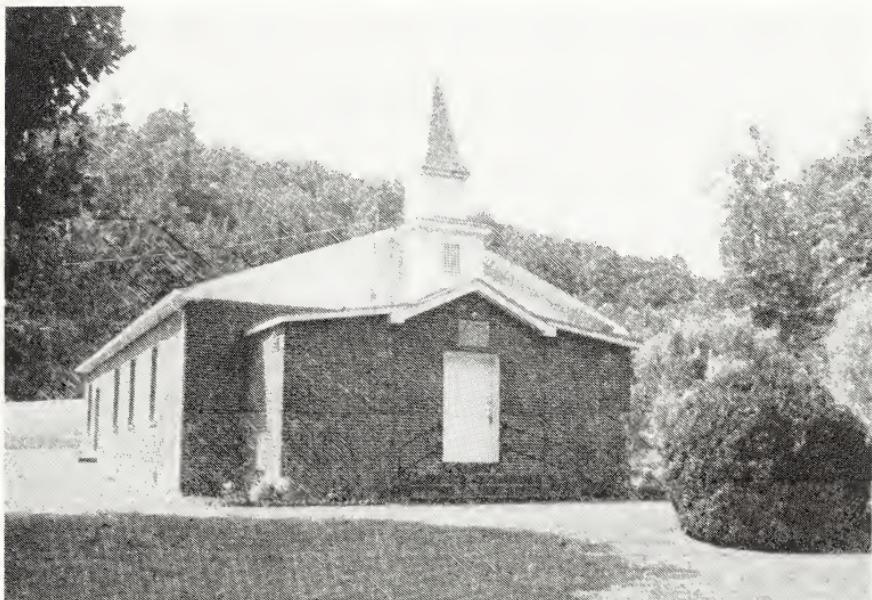
Services were held in the original church building until 1974, when a larger and more modern building was constructed to replace the rock structure, which had become structurally unsound. The new church was a brick building with a spacious sanctuary, basement classrooms, a fellowship hall and landscaped grounds.

In recent years, the church has undertaken some interesting programs. The Big "A" Club met at Ivy Ridge for a time. The Men's Breakfast is held on the first Sunday in the month. Wednesday night suppers are catered by Mars Hill College cafeteria. Under the direction of Kathy Vance, the Ladies Essentials was formed for Bible study, emphasizing Titus, chapter 2, verses 3 and 4 as its origin. A children's choir was formed, and a children's sermon is delivered on Sunday mornings. A youth group was established, and at times has had a paid youth director, while at other times it has been directed by church members. An annual church picnic held at Mars Hill Recreational Center on Crooked Street was initiated as well as an annual weekend camping trip at Black Mountain Campgrounds. During the camping trip, Sunday morning services are enjoyed in the woods while there is a guest speaker at the church for those unable to attend the camp. Community projects of the church have included: painting houses for shut-ins and delivering fruit baskets, flowers and gift boxes to shut-ins. The church adopted a family in an attempt to meet that family's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Another church group, the

Acteens, has been mission oriented. Among other activities, they have cooked a meal for the Rescue Mission, cooked and delivered a Thanksgiving meal to shut-ins, and visited area nursing homes.

From the beginning, the church has had Sunday and Wednesday night services, Sunday School, Woman's Missionary Union, and a Training Union, which in recent years has been omitted. Today, the church has a membership of 234 and a Sunday School enrollment of 78.

❖ **Caney Fork Baptist Church** ❖



Caney Fork Missionary Baptist Church was organized in 1866 by Rev. Garrett Ramsey and Rev. Thomas Rollins on Caney Fork Branch Road. At this time the church was just a framed building. The church was an old log school. According to the deed the land to build was donated by A.J. & A.E. Roberts.

On March 25, 1935, the church was blown away during a hurricane, at this time the church was just a framed building. The church was built back in a very short time by volunteers in the community. It was then built back as a block building. In the early 1960's the church was bricked and stained glass was put in the windows which includes names of some of the older members on gold plates that are placed on the windows in their memory.

Caney Fork Baptist Church doesn't have very many members but is still able to carry on with morning and night services on Sundays and Wednesday. We also have singing every 5th Sunday evening.

Caney Fork Missionary Baptist Church was a member of the Newfound Association; the exact number of years is not known. Due to having very few members, the church did not contribute very much to the Association. In January 1994, Caney Fork then joined with French Broad Association. These are the only two Associations the church has belonged to.

❖ Chapel Hill Baptist Church ❖



The Chapel Hill Baptist Church is located on Chapel Hill Road approximately 3 miles east of Belva Store or 1.5 miles from the intersection of Chapel Hill Road with Highway 212 east of Laurel School. It was named for Mr. Chapel Tweed, a deacon. It was he who donated the ground on which the building was erected in the year 1885. The building belonged to the Masonic Order, having been leased to the Baptists to use for a church as long as they wished. The church was organized on December 11, 1925, by Jess Watts, N.H. Griffin, and Henry Rice. There were three boards of deacons for the church at the time of its organization. One of the boards was from Union Valley, a second was from Big Laurel, and the third board was from Walnut of which Dr. J.H. Hutchins was chairman. There were twenty-one charter members coming

from Big Laurel and other churches of the same faith.

At this organizational meeting, N.H. Griffin was elected pastor and served until 1939 when Rev. D.K. Cohn was elected to serve.

A Woman's Missionary Union was formed in 1985 and was active for two years under the leadership of Janie Franklin and Flo Wallin serving respective terms as President.

A Vacation Bible School is held annually in the summer months. Through this ministry some of our community children and youth have come into a relationship with our Lord. Crafts, Bible Study, and a nighttime cookout highlight this ministry.

Sunday School classes were begun with the organization of the church and have extended to all ages ranging from Nursery Care Classes, Primary Classes, Junior Classes, Youth Classes, Young Adult Classes, Adult Women and Men Classes. Sunday School classes have allowed us to address the needs of these age groups more effectively through being able to focus on the concerns of the varying ages.

Chapel Hill Church has undergone many improvements since its first days as a Masonic Lodge building. Beginning in 1968 new furniture was purchased, an organ was bought, the ceiling in the main church building was lowered, a new furnace was added, and the church was underpinned. In 1970 tinted windows and new doors were seen. In 1971 four more classrooms were built onto the existing building, and the two classrooms already in the building were improved. The church was bricked in 1972, a well was dug in 1975, and carpet

was installed in 1978. Since Rev. Grindstaff became pastor in 1984 our facilities have undergone the following changes: The church building has been insulated, a combination youth building and fellowship hall has been built, the church has been reroofed, a new furnace has replaced the old one, the sanctuary pews have been padded, a new piano has been purchased, the church grounds have been landscaped, a wheelchair ramp with rails has been added to the main building, the church steeple has been replaced, ceiling fans have been installed in the sanctuary and the fellowship hall, vertical blinds have been installed in the fellowship hall, a youth classroom has been constructed in the basement area of the fellowship hall, and new curtains were made and hung in the sanctuary.

The Chapel Hill Baptist Church has supported The French Broad Baptist Association financially and with volunteer help since joining the association in 1968.

We have taken on the support of several Missionaries. We contribute to Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, New Tribes, Gospel Mission Union, Cedine Bible Mission, and Campus Crusade for Christ.

❖ Davis Chapel Baptist Church ❖



The first Davis Chapel Church was a wooden one-story building nestled on the banks of Walnut Creek and Big Branch, facing highway 25-70 leading from Marshall, N.C., to Walnut, N.C. The only way you could get to the church was by walking on a high foot-log bridge across Walnut Creek or by turning into a little dirt road that ran along above the church now called Davis Chapel Road.

Davis Chapel church was anchored by four men of the community who wanted a place for everyone to worship the Lord together. Mr. Steve Davis donated the land. With the help of God, and the backing of Mr. R.B. Deaver, Mr. John Blazer, and Mr. Patterson Davis, this little wooden church, painted white, was built in the year 1909. Many old-time revivals and baptisms in the creek beside the church were witnessed by all. Even members of

the other churches that sprang up in this area of Madison County would attend the revivals. Also, in sight of the church was a State Chain Gang. Sometimes the guards would escort some of the inmates over to the church to attend the services. Many times groups from the church would go across the highway to the Madison County Home to visit and hold church services for the people living there.

It was not an unusual sight to look up the little dirt road and see people getting out of a wagon or buggy to join others at the church, even after the invention of the automobile. Many times the church would be full, with people standing outside in the yard or sitting on the bank at the side of the church so they could see and hear the sermon by just looking in the door or windows which were wide open.

The first pastor of the church was a young and newly ordained minister, Rev. N.H. Griffin. He preached his first sermon in Davis Chapel church. Rev. Griffin served the Lord all of his life, and was well known and loved by everyone. He also preached his last sermon at Davis Chapel. He passed away the next day after preaching.

There has always been many talented members in the church. One member, Hume Clark, knew and could sing songs with the shaped notes from the song books used at that time. He would hold singing schools and teach those interested how to sing. There was no piano. Thus, the church always had a good inspirational singing group. The singers attended conventions held often at one of the churches in and around Marshall.

The little white wooden church kept growing in membership. Its people made the decision to build a larger new church. Rev. Jack Davis was the pastor then. The new church was to be built farther up on the bank above the old one. The funds to build a two-story block building was the soul searching goal on the minds and in the hearts of its members of this farming community.

The men of the church came together and did the labor of building it with the women right beside them helping to dig, lift blocks, and bringing food for everyone at dinner time. The men took turns working at growing a tobacco crop one summer on a bottom land donated by Mr. & Mrs. Dewey Lisenbee. They received all the proceeds toward the building fund. While they waited for the tobacco to grow and be sold, the women held old-fashioned quilting parties making beautiful quilts that were sold to add to the building fund. They held bake sales. Everyone joined in saving their pennies until they were successful in getting their new church built and furnished with beautiful pews and all the inside woodwork being made and molded by the hands of Rev. Jack Davis. They took donations to buy a piano. Everyone was so proud of their new church that had Sunday School class-rooms in the basement. This church was completed in 1953. The little wooden church was torn down. It had served the people a good 46 years.

The bell from the mother church still tolls and calls everyone to **Come** and **Worship** together. The steeple on top of the church today was built and fashioned after the first steeple of Davis Chapel Church by Rev. Jack Davis.

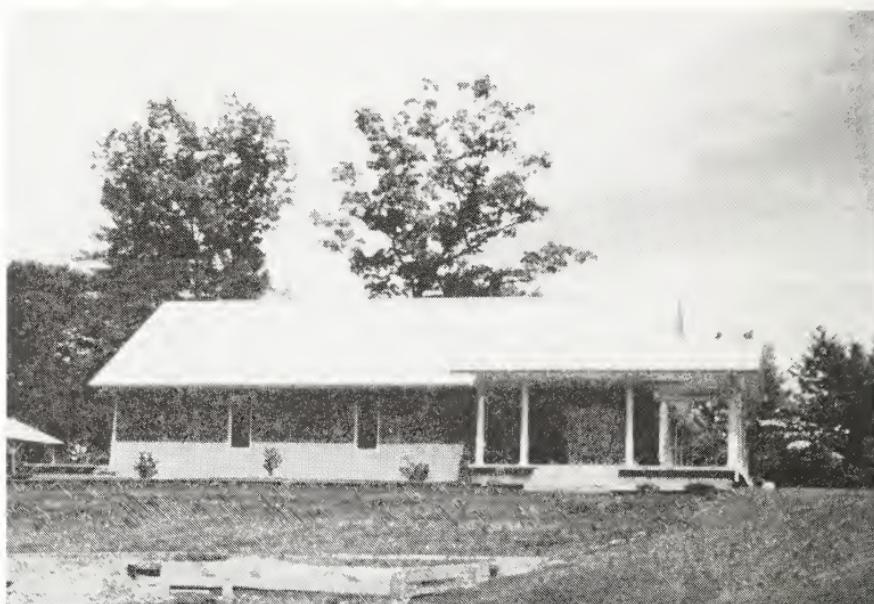
At the present time there are 125 names on the membership roll. We have many worshipers that attend the church regularly. We are proud of our choir and of our piano players, Betty Warren and Bobby Hensley. Adding untold blessings and warmth to the church's music department and worshiping services are the contributions coming from Bill Lisenbee and his sons, Billy, Morris and Ronald who play their guitars, and they all sing. They do our hearts much good.

Davis Chapel Church has served and still is serving the Lord and its community well for a good 85 years. Its doors are always open and the welcoming mat spread out to anyone that will enter in.

Great is the number of persons that have passed and been caught in the silhouette of Davis Chapel Church, and I'm sure that they have been influenced in the way they have lived their lives.

During the last four years, 1991-1994, improvements have been made to the present church. The pews all have been padded and upholstered, new windows and a sound system have been installed, a new roof and white vinyl siding put on the outside, and the parking lot has been paved.

❖ Easter Gap Baptist Church ❖



Even though the building was built in 1941, not much information is available about the church until it was reestablished in 1961 under the leadership of Rev. George P. Massey. There were 12 members at that time. The church was established so that people would gather together, hear the Word of God, and pray for people that they might find salvation.

Sunday School was begun when the church was established but there are no mission organizations at the present time. The church has an active choir that enjoys singing at many other churches.

In July of each year, the church has a Homecoming with services being held for three nights. Special singers are invited to participate in the services each evening. This is usually attended by a large crowd.

The building built in 1949 was used until November 1989. At that time, the church moved into a new building that had been built directly behind the old one. The new structure was much larger with additional Sunday School space. A dedication service was held on June 23, 1991.

Easter Gap joined the French Broad Baptist Association in 1989. Since 1961, the church has had eleven different men as their pastor. The present pastor is Ricky Chandler.

εο Enon Baptist Church εο



On July 1, 1917, members of the Marshall, Madison Seminary and Walnut Creek churches met at Jones School House for the purpose of organizing a Missionary Baptist Church. The Rev. S.T. Hensley was called as the first pastor and L.P. Bryan was elected as the first clerk. Job Rice

donated land for the building. The name Enon Missionary Baptist Church was given the church as voted on by the members. The new building was started in July 1917.

In 1917 Crawford Bryan, Plummer Bryan and Bill West were ordained as Enon's first deacons.

The church building was completed in April 1919. In September 1919 the first revival was held. In 1920 a very successful revival was held with 22 converts and 30 new members joined the church.

The Lord continued to bless Enon with much work being done by pastors and members.

The winter of 1939 was extremely harsh, but people were faithful in the face of such weather and with God's help they pulled through. The church seemed to be in a downfall from 1940 until 1941. Many letters of dismission seem to fall during this time.

In 1951, Rev. Lester Crayton was elected pastor of Enon. Winter seemed harsh and church attendance was very low, but the spirit of the church was not dimmed. The church was growing spiritually. In 1955 a church bus was purchased to be used in any way the members saw fit.

In 1954 a parsonage fund was started and work was started during the summer. The parsonage was completed in 1957. In 1967 a two-car garage was added.

The Lord continued to bless in every way. A driveway around the church was built. A baptismal pool was added and new pews were installed.

The years 1970 and 1971 seemed to be great for the young people of the church. Ten made professions of faith, were baptized and joined the church.

In 1983 the groundbreaking ceremony for a fellowship hall, educational building took place. This was a very exciting time for Enon church. The dedication of the fellowship hall took place on October 5, 1986.

The fellowship continued to grow and much work was done, a new furnace was installed in the church and the parsonage carpeted.

During 1991, the parsonage kitchen and second bathroom were remodeled, the parsonage and church driveway was paved and church pews covered.

In 1992 a Youth Revival was held with 3 youth saved and many lives rededicated to the Lord. Plans are being made for the church's 75th anniversary. The Lord continues to bless.

❖ Forks of Ivy Baptist Church ❖



The Forks of Ivy church was organized in 1843. The church was formed in a big house on the back of Little Ivy Creek in Madison County, N.C., near the location of the present building at the junction of Big and Little Ivy Creek, hence the name Forks of Ivy.

The first presbytery consisted of Rev. Jacob Metcalf, Reuben Deaver and William Keith. The charter members consisted of eighteen brethren and sisters. The church was constituted by Rev. Stephen Morgan and Rev. Robert Patterson on the fourth sabbath in April 1850. The Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and Covenant were adopted on June 5, 1869. Rev. Jacob Metcalf was the first pastor.

Sometime after the church was organized, the members built a small plank building which was

used until 1886. At this time a frame building was erected and used until 1917, when the present structure located on the Madison-Buncombe line was begun. Rev. R.P. McCracken from Clyde, N.C., was the architect. The building was constructed of concrete block and was one of the first churches known to have a "self-supporting" roof. It was built on a beautiful elevation between and overlooking the waters of Big Ivy and Little Ivy Creek. A church bell purchased in 1902 and a pulpit from the old church were placed in the new structure. Worship in the new church was on April 6, 1919.

The church became a member of the French Broad Association in 1850 and has been affiliated with this organization during its entire history except for a four-year period when the church joined the Buncombe Association.

Land was purchased in 1921 for a church cemetery. The church voted in 1928 to install electric lights. Many additions have been made through the years including the following: a six-room Sunday School building in 1948, a water system and two restrooms in 1951, a parsonage in 1956, a baptistry in 1965, stained glass windows for the sanctuary in 1966, a fellowship hall in 1988 and a new steeple was put atop the bell tower in 1992.

Discipleship Training has been a part of the church since 1925. The first Vacation Bible School was in June of 1943 with an enrollment of 36. The church has the following organizations: Woman's Missionary Union which began in 1915, G.A.'s that began in 1942, Acteens that was started in 1934, Mission Friends in 1946, and Baptist Young Women in 1992.

The Constitution and By-Laws of the church was adopted July 2, 1958. The constitution was prepared by a special committee appointed by the Baptist State Convention of NC.

Through the years the church has ordained five men to the ministry: Enoch Sumter Morgan, Truman Fisher, Vincent Young, Lester Murphey, John Bussard. It has licensed three; Jack Chalmers, Walter Wood, and Jimmie Buckner. Forty-five men have pastored the church since its beginning with the present pastor being Jerry Shelton.

❖ Gabriels Creek Baptist Church ❖



Sometime in the summer of 1837 or before settlers from White Oak, Gabriels Creek, and Flat Creek Communities felt the need for a church in the Gabriels Creek community. They had been worshiping in the Flat Creek, Little Ivy and Bull

Creek Churches. Garrett DeWeese helped organize the church and they joined the Big Ivy Association and remained a member until that association disbanded. Gabriels Creek Church became a member of the French Broad Association, with many of its members being influential in Associational work.

The church grew in numbers and in 1840 was considered to be a leading church in the area. Many of its members were influential in the work of the association and in the school at Mars Hill. The first Sunday School in the association was organized at Gabriels Creek in 1853.

The church withdrew from the association in 1864 and joined the Newfound Association, but returned to the French Broad in 1871. During this year a Sunday School Library was established for the use of its members.

Gabriels Creek early became a Missionary Church and we find as early as 1853 they contributed ten dollars to missions.

The first church house was of hewn logs and located near Gabriels Creek or Ivy River with a cemetery on the hill above Gabriels Creek. Later, William and Isabella Palmer Sprinkle gave the land and the church moved to its present location. Here a log building was constructed and later an arbor. Another log building was used until 1911 when a plank building was constructed. Mrs. A.J. (Jack) Sprinkle traveled through the community to collect money and materials for the building, and ironically, her funeral was the first service in the building.

The plank building remained in use until 1953, when Loy Griffin gave one hundred dollars to start

a building fund. After he was killed in the Korean War, his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Posey Griffin, gave two thousand dollars to the fund. The building was completed in 1953. In the 1970's classrooms, baptistry and fellowship hall were added. In 1989 handicapped ramps were built.

Church training was organized in the early 1950's during the pastorate of J.J. Slagle. WMU was organized in the early 1960's with Mrs. Orlanda Hawkins as the first President. The first Acteen leader at this time was Carolyn Howell Robinson. An RA organization was started in 1987 with Frank Parks and James Greene as leaders.

In 1986 a Youth Group was organized with Thelma Rice as leader. This group has continued to encourage the youth of the community to be active in church and community affairs.

Music has been a great influence within the church. The choir began as a youth choir in the 1970's with Mary Etta Coffey Clark and Shelby Jarrett Robinson as leaders. At the present time the choir is for all ages with Vaughn Robinson as director.

Gabriels Creek celebrated its 150th birthday in September 1987. The church has been a great influence in the life of the community.

Grandview Baptist Church



In the winter of 1884, a group of Christians who lived on Panhandle Branch met at the home of Jacob Fisher for the purpose of organizing a Missionary Baptist Church in their community. This group were members of the Sugar Camp church which was located on Big Ivy in the community now known as Oak Grove. This decision was made because of the distance to travel, which was done by walking or by horse and wagon. These pioneers, with a strong faith in God and a strong love and devotion to the cause of Christ, opened up the way for a church to be planted in their community.

For the first seven years after the organization of the church, no records were preserved, but according to tradition the church was officially organized in January of 1884 and services were held in the log school house which stood above the

spring of the Reese farm on Panhandle Branch. The church was made up of seventeen charter members who brought their letters from Sugar Camp. Rev. Alfred Bradley was their first pastor and the leader in their organization.

The one-room school, which served as the church also, was made of hewed logs, with seats made of split logs. There was no pulpit for the pastor and the flooring was made of rough lumber. The name "French Broad" was chosen at that time because the building was located between the waters of the French Broad river and Big Ivy creek.

By 1896, the membership had increased from 17 to 128. We find they were always alert to their duties as Christians. They gave faithfully and sacrificially to Foreign Missions, Home Missions, the orphanage, the aged ministers, the needy of the community, as well as supporting their pastor.

It is believed they immediately joined the French Broad Association. Names of delegates appointed were recorded in 1891.

In church conference on August 6, 1892, the church agreed and voted to build a church. They decided to build on the present location which was given by Mr. and Mrs. E.H. Buckner. This spot was chosen because of its location on the road. Money to build this church was raised by pledges. The building was a frame house with only an auditorium. This building was built between 1901 and 1904 but the date of completion is not recorded.

The church decided to change the name after moving upon the hill. On September 28, 1902, they announced that the committee had chosen

"Grandview" because of the wonderful view from the place. Also, after completion of the church, the Burnette heirs gave a plot of land for the church cemetery. A plot of land was given by Jacob Fisher which was the church cemetery while the church was on Panhandle.

The first building was used until 1921 when the church voted to enlarge and build a better church. The old building was torn down and the same place was graded for the new one. The new one-room building, which is the auditorium of the present building, was made of cement blocks. Church services were held in the Grandview school during the time the church was being built. The dedicatory sermon for the new church was preached on August 6, 1922, by Rev. L.C. Roberts.

In 1948, the church adopted the budget system of financing the church, except for the pastor's salary, which was included three years later. The church adopted the "indefinite call" system of calling the pastor. The church began having Vacation Bible School in 1948 and has had a two-week school each year since 1950. A Training Union was organized in 1956. The first WMU was organized in 1909, and in the church minutes of 1915, it was active. It was reorganized in 1951 and again in 1959.

Through the years, the church has licensed four ministers; Arcemus Reese, Otto Reese, Curtis Reese, and Ralph Carter. Two have been ordained who were, W.H. Hooker and Columbus Cole.

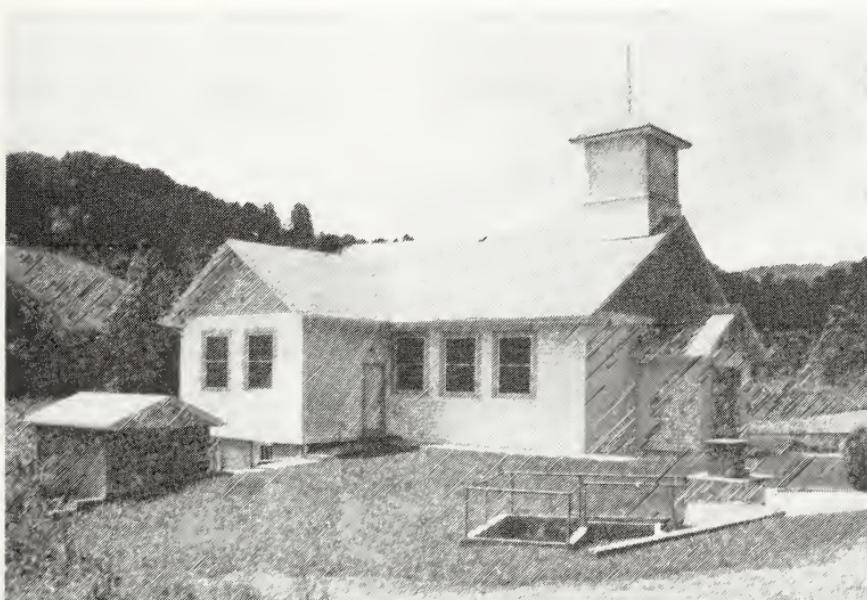
A church bus was bought in 1952. A gas heating system was installed in 1956. In 1957, new pews were purchased with memory plates attached to

show the donors. Pulpit furniture was purchased in 1958.

Many dedicated pastors have helped build the foundation in so worthy a way that it has stood years of growth. We have had 25 pastors with the Rev. Guy Sluder serving longer than anyone else. Under his leadership, several improvements were made, which include installing paneling, sheet rock, and carpet in the auditorium. Four classrooms were also carpeted. A well was drilled in January, 1974, and rest rooms were installed.

Because of the present size of our community, with churches in the adjoining communities, and with so many young people seeking employment elsewhere, the membership has not grown in the past several years as it did at first. But after hearing how our forefathers worked so faithfully and earnestly "to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" and that this church was founded for the high and noble purpose to glorify Christ and for the saving of souls, may we take new courage in this our day. We are blessed with even greater means to serve our Christ and lift high the torch of true and strong Baptist principles which were passed to us from them. May we never fail these our forefathers in their trust in us to keep the Baptist spirit alive in our community.

❖ Grapevine Baptist Church ❖



Grapevine Missionary Baptist Church was organized in 1864, meeting in a log building located approximately half a mile down the road from the location of the present church building. Our country was in a midst of a civil war that had reached deep into the hollows and coves of Western North Carolina, bringing conflict and divisions in families and communities in addition to loss of lives of loved ones. There was always the eminent danger of being caught up in the midst or destroyed by the enemy. It was in such an environment that the earliest families on the west Fork of Bull Creek in Madison County came together to form a little church group, meeting in a log building, to worship God and seek His refuge in such trying times.

The first recorded pastor of Grapevine Missionary Baptist Church was Rev. W.M. Sprinkle, who

served from 1868 until 1875. Rev. George W. Gosnell served as pastor from 1875 until 1884. The French Broad Missionary Baptist Church Directory of 1913 records his death on May 2, 1913, and says, "Beginning at Flag Pond (he was ordained to the ministry July 17, 1868 at Flag Pond, Tennessee), he preached to churches at Clear Branch and Coffee Ridge, then through Laurel to Grapevine, Bull Creek, and others of our churches. He was a pioneer in the work at Grapevine, preaching there before there was any established church, and being largely instrumental in the progress of this church in later years. As an humble instrument he was the means of bringing many to knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the early 1880's a building was erected near the site of the present church. The frame building was two stories high, and the upper story was used by the Masons for their lodge meetings.

Construction on the present church began in 1926. A. Horace Sams was in charge of construction. The men of the community donated their labor to build the church. Money to buy the materials for building was donated by many families in the community, and many women contributed their money earned from the sale of butter and eggs to the building fund. The women also cooked the meals for the men as they labored to construct the church building.

In 1932, families living in the Arrington Branch and upper Grapevine Communities, decided to build a church closer to their homes in that area, and withdrew from Grapevine Baptist Church to form the Arrington Branch Baptist Church. This

move was made with the complete cooperation of the Grapevine Baptist Church, and both churches have continued to work together over the years, helping in both churches during revivals, singing schools, ordination services, baptizing, vacation Bible schools, decoration day services, funerals, and other special services.

Many family names appear on the oldest register of church members. These dedicated families have contributed to the Lord's work in the Grapevine Community. Much work has been accomplished on the building and grounds. The preaching of the Gospel and the witness of Christian people have led many souls to Christ.

May we continue to grow through the leadership of many of the descendants of the early church and other dedicated Christian leaders.

❖ Hopewell Baptist Church ❖



Hopewell Baptist Church at 1041 Highway 25-70 was organized Dec. 3, 1916. This location was the site of Hopewell Presbyterian School which was serving the community in January, 1903 with Miss Sue R. Grindstaff as teacher. George W. and Martha Carolina Smith Gahagan deeded property for the school to the Presbyterian Church March 27, 1903. The Madison County Board of Education purchased the property from the Presbyterian Church Sept. 28, 1911. A public school was operated at Hopewell until the early 1920s.

The Board of Education sold the property to Trustees of Hopewell Baptist Church, B.W. Gahagan, R.H. Lewis and Willie Rice, on December 13, 1924. The deed states "It is expressly provided that this property shall not consolidate with any other church but is to be held for a community

Baptist Church". It is assumed the Church met in the school from 1916 until the property was purchased for the church.

Report of the December 3, 1916, organizational meeting states "By permission of the Walnut Baptist Church at Walnut, N.C. we, the undersigned, organized an independent Baptist Church at Hopewell... Rev. W.P. McCarter was elected and Sister Nettie Rice was elected church clerk". There follows a list of twenty-two names.

Hopewell Baptist Church met for the second time at 2:30 PM on December 23, 1916, at which time Jethro Laws and Paul Rice were elected deacons. They were ordained on February 3, 1917, with Rev. W.P. McCarter and John S. Rice officiating in the ordination. Regular meeting dates for the church were 2:30 PM on Saturday before the first Sunday and also at 2:30 PM on the first Sunday.

The Hopewell Baptist Church became a member of the French Broad Baptist Association in 1917. Seventeen baptisms were reported; fifteen were received by letter and five were "restored". The pastor was paid \$23 for the year and \$6 given to all mission causes.

An entry in the church report dated 1934 states "Rev. Henry Rice elected pastor - served one year. After this the church was in need of repairs and no services were held for about three years ... people in the community got together and reorganized Sunday School. The men covered the church, and the ladies organized a Ladies' Aid and made enough money to floor the church".

The next report, dated December 10, 1939, lists Rev. Everette Sprinkle as pastor. Entry of October

12, 1940, states "Rev. Sprinkle resigned... Rev. Kimsey Ball was elected pastor." Rev. Ball was Vice-Moderator of the Newfound Missionary Baptist Association. In the 87th annual meeting of that Association, held August 13, 1942, the Report on Admissions of New Churches states "We highly recommend they (Hopewell and other churches) be admitted to this body of believers, the Newfound Missionary Baptist Association." Rev. Ball served as Hopewell pastor until August 1946 at which time Rev. L.A. Mason was elected pastor serving until August, 1947. Church services were held on the second Sunday of the month. There were 69 members of the church.

Beginning in 1953, church services were held twice monthly, on the second and fourth Sundays. In 1956, the church property was valued at \$2,000. That year marked the beginning of a period of construction during which six Sunday School classrooms and a vestibule were added to the original structure. Extensive renovations were made to the church interior. These included installation of sheet rock, a furnace, two bathrooms, new pews and pulpit furniture. Much of this work was done by volunteer labor from the Church. By 1960 the property valuation was listed at \$7,000. There were 35 resident members and 36 non-resident members of the church. In 1968 the Church purchased an additional half-acre tract of land joining the Church property. By 1971, the Church was engaged in an ambitious building program: the addition of a fellowship hall and converting the frame structure to brick. A new piano and Hammond organ had been purchased. Church services were

held each Sunday morning. There were 70 resident members and 52 non-resident members of the Church.

On August 10, 1972, Hopewell Baptist Church was received into the French Broad Baptist Association. The motion to receive the church stated "Hopewell has been a member of Newfound Association but has worked closely with our association for many years." During these "many years", Rev. and Mrs. David Roberts assisted with Vacation Bible Schools, the enrollment at which equalled or exceeded Sunday School attendance.

Sunday School services have been an integral part of Hopewell church activities from the earliest days of the church. At some periods of time Sunday School was held at 2:30 PM in the afternoons. A Sunday School report dated June 2, 1918, lists four classes, attendance 66 and offering \$0.42. This report is typical of Sunday School reports for many years. Vacation Bible Schools have been held each year since 1949. Present Sunday School enrollment is 41.

At the present time (1993) church property is valued at \$50,000. There are 77 resident and 47 non-resident members of the Church. Services are held each Sunday morning and Sunday evening. The church makes a monthly contribution to the French Broad Baptist Association; each fifth Sunday offering is set aside for the Rev. Charles Buckner's missionary work in Indonesia.

Rev. Joe Tomberlin has begun his seventh year as pastor. The current Board of Deacons is J. Leonard Baker, Chairman; Clyde Randall, Gar-

land Adams, Ralph Baker, Bailey Lewis and Raymond Ledford.

¤ Hot Springs Baptist Church ¤



“As we trust we have been brought by Divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the influence of his Spirit to give ourselves up to Him, so we do now solemnly covenant with each other, that God enabling us we will walk together in brotherly love; that we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully warn, rebuke, and admonish one another as the case shall require; that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer both for ourselves and others; that we will participate in each others joys, and endeavor, with tenderness and sympathy to bear each others burdens and sorrows; that we will

earnestly endeavor to bring up such as may be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that we will seek spiritual aid to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world denying ungodliness and every worldly lust; that we will strive together to support a faithful evangelical ministry among us; that we will endeavor by example and effort to win souls to Christ; and through life amidst evil report and good report, seek to live to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, and that each of us will bear our proportionate part of the expenses of the church by giving of our substance as the Lord prospered us."

From one original Church Minutes written in 1886 at Warm Springs, North Carolina. R.A. Sentell was Secretary.

This Covenant is not identical with the one found in the back of our Baptist Hymnal but its meaning is similar. It is indeed fortunate and unique that we have our own church covenant. We should feel closer and more responsible to Our Covenant.

The Warm Springs Baptist Church was established on July 11, 1886. The membership came from Morristown, Tennessee, and Asheville, North Carolina, Churches. They were established and assisted in becoming a church by the presbytery from Carson Newman College which included the President of that institution, W.A. Montgomery, D.D.(which later served as its pastor from 1894 until 1898.)

The name of the church and the town were changed later in 1886 to Hot Springs. At a later

date, the church name was changed to First Baptist Church of Hot Springs.

The first structure, a frame building, was located on the main street across from the present location of Dorland Memorial Presbyterian Church. Finding themselves bordered on three sides by the campus of Dorland Institute, with no room for expansion, the property on Main Street was sold in 1915 to Dorland Institute. The frame building was moved to a lot on the other side of Dorland Memorial Church. This Meadow Lane location is the site of the present church.

The frame building was eventually replaced by a stone structure. A brick educational building was erected in 1958 and a sanctuary was added in 1978.

The "Missionary Spirit" has been imbedded into the life of Hot Springs Baptist Church. One of the first acts of business in 1886 was to designate offerings for Foreign Missions Education, Domestic Missions and Home Missions. These organizations are still in the church and each one is set up on four month basis. For example our Annie Armstrong Offering is from January to April, Home for the Aged, Hospitals, and Children Homes from May to August and Lottie Moon Offerings from September to December.

Our Sunday School, W.M.U., and Discipleship Training have always been a part of the church organization. They have been an ongoing part of our church for as long as anyone can remember.

The church Choir has been in the church as long as anyone can remember also. The present Choir has been there since 1976.

Some of the first members of the church served as deacons as well clerks, and secretaries. Some of them were as follows: Margaret Brevers, Mr. & Mrs. I.H. Gorenflo, Sarah Gorenflo, Mrs. Ella Gowan, Alice Lezenbe, C.D. Merrit, Mrs. Lizzie Merrit and Miss Mamie Gowan.

The Warm Springs Church belonged to the Newfound Baptist Association. The following were the first messengers to the Newfound Baptist Association which met at the Flats of Spring Creek on August 11, 1887. The messengers were as follows: Rev. J.E. Carter, I.H. Gorenflo, and C.D. Merritt. There were messengers to this association from its birth in 1886 until 1957. Then it made application to the Executive Committee of the French Broad Baptist Association. At the evening session, August 9, 1957, the French Broad Baptist Association approved the admission of Hot Springs Baptist Church and Trinity Baptist Churches. Thus Hot Springs has given support and received assistance from the French Broad Association from 1957 until the present day.

The first Baptism of the church was held in Spring Creek on April 22, 1887, and the following persons were baptized into the membership of the church: Miss Sadie Bowles, Jos Fresham and Miss Ema Sowers.

This is a summary of the History of the First Baptist Church of Hot Springs, N.C. We couldn't say everything about it for there was so much we didn't have information on. It is a summary of an organization, a structure, and people working together to promote God's love and salvation through Jesus Christ. Many have known its love, its fellow-

ship, its comfort, its problems, its good times, and its bad times. All who have known it have been drawn closer to God by it. May the future hold the same as the First Baptist Church of Hot Springs strengthens its bonds.

❖ Ivy Hill Baptist Church ❖



The year was 1896. There was a small group of people meeting in a one-room school house to have worship services. They had a vision of a church building—"without a vision, the people perish." "Faith without works is dead." A group of fifteen went to work. Ivy Hill Church was organized in 1896. Martha Buckner gave the land for the building; Lafayette McKinney gave the timber and he with the help of John Emory cut the trees and hauled them to Rich Drake's to be sawed into lumber to build the church. The men of the com-

munity did the building while the ladies did the cooking and other tasks. Rev. Jack Sprinkle was the first pastor.

By the forties, time had taken its toll on the building and more space for Sunday School rooms was needed. In the summer, some of the classes were held outside. In the winter the congregation would gather around a wood stove and have services. The gospel was proclaimed at the evening services amid the flickering lights of the oil lamps. The oil lamps were replaced with electric lights in 1940.

Under the leadership of pastor Willard Coffey, the church undertook its second building project. Rev. Coffey, Jay King, Jerry Emory, and Buster Sprinkle cut the trees and hauled them to the sawmill. In 1950 Jeff Emory was elected to be chairman of the building committee consisting of Clarence Emory, Lee Emory, Donald Whitt, and Bruce Riddle. The cost for building the new church was \$1800. Labor was free except for that of the block mason, Mr. Wyatt, and carpenter, Grady Riddle. Worth Emory began his training as a carpenter during this building project. The first service was held in the new church building on August 3, 1951. The service was conducted by Lloyd Ponder, pastor since September 1948.

Worth Emory became pastor of Ivy Hill in July 1960. The church grew in membership and mission giving. Another addition to the building was made in 1961 and a community building was constructed in 1965 with Eric Emory serving as chairman of the building committee. Rev. Worth Emory celebrated 20th, 25th, and 30th anniversa-

ries as the church's pastor. The church has been involved in mission work with several members making mission building trips to many states and Venezuela and Honduras. The church continues to grow under the leadership of Rev. Emory.

❖ Jones Valley Baptist Church ❖



On October 3, 1899, a small group of Christians met at Liberty School House on Big Sandy Mush to organize a Baptist Church. They appointed Rev. W.N. Martins, moderator pro tem. The church covenant was read and agreed on by members. Rev. C.C. Clubb was elected pastor. The Pastor set the 3rd Sunday in October for Baptism. There were seventeen baptized. The church was named Jones Chapel Baptist Church. On October 14, 1899, a church clerk was elected, Ennie King. November 4, elected, Lillie King, Treasurer, and 2 deacons were

elected, Lawrence Jones and Coyd Woody. On November 5, 1899, Mark King was elected deacon.

The church was renamed Jones Valley Baptist Church, and the building was constructed in 1901-1902. The church was located on Sandy Mush Creek, on what is now known as Sugar Creek Road. The land, timbers, and finances were donated by members of the church.

On December 26, 1899, a protracted meeting was started which continued for several days, which resulted in 5 new members, four of these by baptism.

July 1901 church records show an election of delegates to the association. On October 5, 1902, there were 23 baptized.

Progress in the church slowed in the late 1920's then was renewed in 1933.

Jones Valley Baptist Church was destroyed by a flood November 6, 1977. On November 9, Brother Luther Osment met with members and pastor Rev. Gary Rogers, to help in our endeavor to rebuild. Mr. Green McCormick of N.C. Baptist met with us and was very helpful in finding a suitable place to rebuild and to send Mr. Cary Myatt of Greensboro (art) to draw up plans to fill our needs. Concrete was poured for the foundation March 24, 1978. Construction began April 10, 1978. Baptist men from the N.C. Baptist State Convention's Brotherhood volunteered to help rebuild the church. Some stayed at the site of construction of the building. Volunteers from Buncombe, French Broad Associations and other individuals worked on the building. Also many ladies from churches brought lunch for the volunteers. We received love offerings from

local churches, individuals and from churches and people around the entire state and even as far as Kentucky. We received chairs for Sunday School rooms, piano, organ and song books.

A Church steeple was installed June 8, 1978. We had our first service June 11, 1978. Dedication service was July 30, 1978. We had a wonderful service, praising the Lord for His love and mercy. We had preaching, lots of good singing and speakers from Buncombe Baptist Association, and Mr. Green McCormick from Greensboro presented a picture he drew of the old and the new churches to hang in the vestibule. Lunch was served on church grounds and a good time was enjoyed by all.

Our present pastor is Rev. Bill Gillespie. Present membership is 59.

❖ Laurel Bend Baptist Church ❖



The first record of a Baptist Church in the community served by Laurel Bend Church was in the 1890's. At that time Ivy Ridge School was used as a meeting place. Services were held on Saturdays and Sundays.

The first minutes that were recorded was in 1894. The Articles of Faith and the Church Covenant were written out in the beginning of the Day Book. These were inspiring to read. A lot of thought and prayer were put into the writing of these. There were 75 members that were recorded in the book. The Rev. J.S. Lewis was the first preacher of the church.

Saturday, July 15, 1895, is the first mention about the association in which the church met in a business session to elect delegates to represent the church. It doesn't mention the name of the

association. Also the first mention of a deacon occurred in 1895. No meetings were held from September 1897 to July 1898 due to the lack of a preacher.

February 1, 1902, the church met in council and on a motion the church was disbanded. In 1903 a series of meetings were held and the church was called into a session of business where the church was reestablished. Communion and foot washing was held in May of 1904.

At the Sunday worship service in February of 1910, the church met for the ordination of Joshua Phillips. After being thoroughly examined to the ministry he was pronounced Orthodox and duly ordained by prayer and laying on of the hands, after which the Lord's Table was set. There followed a time of Christian fellowship and foot washing. An offering of one dollar was taken for the pastor.

In 1917 the church constituted a missionary church to be known as the Baptist Church of Christ at Ivy Ridge. Nine were received by letter and eleven transferred from the old church.

In September of 1939 joint services, Baptists and Methodists, were held. These folks got along well together. Baptists held two or more services each month and the Methodists also held two services with each holding a revival meeting each year.

About 1940 leaders in the church decided that they needed a church building in which to worship. W.O. English gave land for the building near a bend in the Laurel Creek. Volunteer carpenters, using lumber donated by local families and cut at the local sawmill, erected the building. The name "Laurel Bend" was chosen at that time.

In 1948 a revival was held by Rev. Frank English, Pastor, Rev. Lad Ponder, and Rev. Earl Cole. Rev. English set the second Sunday night and the fourth Sunday morning as regular preaching services.

Rev. Ponder and Rev. Cole are still preaching the gospel today. Rev. English is deceased.

In 1950 the church felt like they needed a new church to worship in. There was a business meeting to discuss buying property. Several members pledged to help with the building which amounted to \$1,020.00. On May 5, 1950, Leonard and Eileen English gave one half acre for a new church. Lumber was taken out of the old church and used to construct the existing church. While the church was being built, services were held in an Old Talc Mill. The new church was completed in 1951. In 1953 the church was dedicated to God with singing, a dedicational sermon by Rev. Norm Phillips and dinner on the ground. The year of 1954 was a period of growth for the church. Revivals were held, souls were saved, several were baptized and joined the church.

In the early sixties the church saw a need to remodel because of the increase in attendance. Four classrooms, 2 bathrooms, and a new pulpit area were added. A cemetery was given to the church in 1972 by Paul Rice. In December 1972, the church saw a need to put new pews and carpet in the church. Each family bought a pew, costing \$107.00 per pew.

In 1976, nine churches in the area had joint services each fifth Sunday night. A different pastor preached each fifth Sunday night. The old Ebb's

Chapel School auditorium was remodeled for a place to hold the services. Community revivals were also held there.

The church ministers at the Madison Manor Nursing Home each Sunday morning. The church is presently making plans for a fellowship hall and additional classrooms. The Lord surely has blessed the people at Laurel Bend Baptist Church.

❖ Laurel Branch Baptist Church ❖



Laurel Branch Baptist church was organized on the 27th day of November, 1870. After preaching by Elder R. Patterson, serving as chairman and S.J. Morgan as clerk, the first members agreed to organize a church. These members were: Zacharial Bryan, Naomi Bryan, Jesse Fisher, Lucinda Fisher, Martha West, Matilda Norton, and Anna Keith. The church was organized to profess and believe the

abstract of principal set forth and held by the French Broad Baptist Association. The body was constituted into a church by the presbytery consisting of Elder R. Patterson and L. DeWeese.

At the time of this organization, the meeting was held in the old Laurel Branch School House, which stood just in front of the present building, on the stream known as Laurel Branch, so named by the early settlers because of the dense thickets of Laurel bushes growing along its banks.

In 1886 the people with others that had been added, decided they needed a better house of worship. Under the leadership of J.A. Bradley the building was erected.

The church continued to grow and during this period 2 members were sent out as ministers; Rev. L.C. Roberts, who at one time served as pastor, and Rev. W.Z. White, who served in other fields.

In 1953-1954 under the leadership of Rev. Kemsey Ball, a new house of worship was built on land given by Mr. & Mrs. Anderson Metcalf. The building was dedicated to the Lord on May 29, 1960.

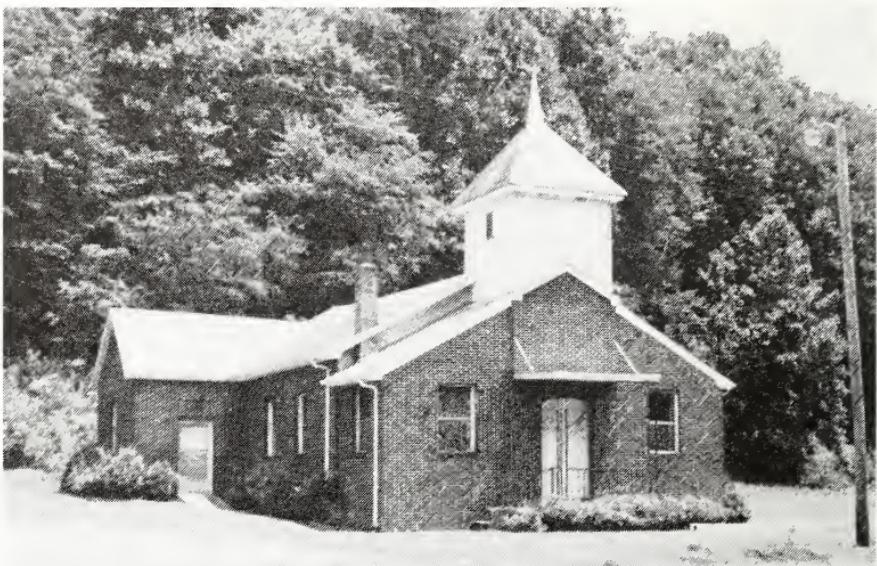
Through the years the people of Laurel Branch have continued to improve their house of worship. New pews and pulpit furniture were added in 1965, and in 1979 a baptistry and carpet were added. Also a new well was dug. The parking lot was paved in 1983 and in 1992-93 a fellowship hall was built.

Missions have been an important part of Laurel Branch growth. WMU was organized in 1915. It was a strong organization for many years. Laurel Branch hosted the Annual WMU Associational Meetings in the years 1917, 1925, 1932, 1948 and

1956. There have been periods when the WMU as an organization was not active, but the missionary zeal has always prevailed. At the present time there are 13 Baptist Women and an Acteen organization.

May we be inspired to follow the example of the many Christian families that have contributed to the Laurel Branch Baptist Church. May we always be faithful to God and His leadership.

❖ Laurel Chapel Baptist Church ❖



Jesse Corn was holding a revival in an old building in the Big Laurel Community in 1927. Several members of Little Creek Baptist Church attended this revival. They were asked by their pastor to apologize to the church for attending the revival. Whenever they refused to do so, they were turned out of Little Creek Church and established

Corn's Chapel Baptist Church November 6, 1927, electing Jesse Corn as pastor.

A News Record article in 1930 quoted, "He did such a great work in our community. We feel the love of God is in his heart." It was suggested by both saints and sinners that we should name the church Corn's Chapel. This article was written by W.M. Edmonds and Essie Wheeler who were charter members. Other Charter members were Canie Edmonds, Rachel Edmonds, Earnest Metcalf, Claude Carver, Albert Carver, Troy Edmonds, Ed Edmonds, Amali Wheeler, Clyde Wheeler, Ada Wheeler, Derotha Carver, W.D. Carver, J.H. Carver and Herbert Carver. Pastor elected: Jesse Corn, Clerk: Essie Wheeler; Deacons: W.D. Carver, J.H. Carver, Herbert Carver. Jesse Corn served as pastor until mid 1930's and Rev. Henry Rice was elected. Rev. Rice did not feel a church should be named for a man and he named the church for the community: Laurel Chapel Baptist Church.

Members of the congregation donated timber (sawed at a local sawmill) and built the first church below the road on Highway 34 and Big Laurel Road. Whenever the current highway was built, the church was moved to its current location.

The church choir sang without music until the mid-50's. Ebb Jenkins agreed to play the first piano. Shortly afterwards, he was called to the ministry and Ebb's father (John) gave Lucille Shelton Pack \$10.00 to learn to play the piano. Sylvan Shelton spent many hours helping Lucille with the music. Lucille still plays the piano or organ at the church.

The church used a wood heater until 1964

when Britton Pack (now married to Lucille Shelton) installed (at night) the furnace that is still used at the church. Bathrooms were added in the early 70's as well as brick.

Two people who will always be remembered by the children at Laurel Chapel are Rev. and Mrs. David Roberts (Associational Missionaries). They came each summer for several years and did the Vacation Bible School. The Bible Drills and scriptures we learned as children still remains in our hearts.

Laurel Chapel Church has been pastored by numerous preachers throughout the years.

❖ Laurel Valley Baptist Church ❖



Laurel Valley Baptist Church was organized in September, 1922 by Rev. Mr. Whortow, LLD., then Bible teacher at Mars Hill College. He was assisted

by Rev. R.H. Morgan of Mars Hill, N.C. who was at that time holding a revival meeting at that place and was assisted by members from California Creek Baptist church and Upper Laurel Baptist Church. Charter Members: Professor G.W. Byrd and wife, Mary Bird, Mrs Sallie Crowder, Mr. G.W. Marshbanks and wife, Mary Marshbanks, Mrs. Jane Barnes, Mrs. S.J. Randolph, Mr. Kims Fox, Miss Dorie Fox, Mrs. Sherman Ballard and wife, Matilda Ballard, Miss Elima Banks and Miss Florence Banks.

The first pastor was Rev. R.H. Morgan, then of Mars Hill, N.C., who pastored the church about two years. Then the church elected Rev. Ellis Reece, of Mars Hill, N.C., who attended the church about eighteen months. The church then elected Rev. J.D. King of Yancey County, N.C., who pastored the church through 1932. Sherman Ballard was elected first church clerk and served until he moved from the settlement; then the church elected Mr. M.D. Crowder.

The church has a membership at present of about thirty. We have Sunday School for eight months in the year and a revival meeting every year and sometimes two revivals in one year.

In 1931 the school at Laurel Valley consolidated with Ebbs Chapel School. On November the 2nd, 1931, the community bought the school building and the grounds from the Madison County commissioners to be used as a church. The building was lowered and an addition was added and a lot of other renovations and landscaping was done that made the building into a nice church. Over the years a lot of improvements were made.

In 1971 the church had prospered enough until there were funds to build a new church. A beautiful A-Frame Church was built on the property and a lot of landscaping was done and made a wonderful place to worship.

There has been a lot of good men pastored and a lot of dedicated Christians that put a lot of physical and spiritual labor to make this the prettiest place in the community.

In 1990 the members saw a need for a fellowship hall. In 1993 a beautiful fellowship hall and all the furnishings was completed.

This being 1994 we have 55 active members and Rev. Ratha Wilson is the pastor.

¤ Liberty Baptist Church ¤



August 26, 1906, a congregation of Brothers and Sisters met for the purpose of organizing

Liberty Baptist Church. After election of Rev. E. Holt as Moderator, the Church Covenant and Articles of Faith were read and adopted by the brothers and sisters present. Times of worship were chosen and a building committee elected.

This is all of the available early history due to the loss of a church book; however, from talking with some of the elder members of our church, it has been determined that the church still stands on its original site with some changes through the years to the original structure, still founded in the Word of God.

The next written record book begins with an entry dated March 1, 1935. This entry shows Everett Sprinkle as pastor of the membership numbering 145. Creta Fowler was elected Clerk, a position she held continuously until 1957, and several times since then.

Liberty Baptist Church has always supported Children's Homes, beginning in 1946, and continuing to the present. The church has always helped members in need, families with Medical bills, burnedout-homes, the elderly with winter fuel bills, as well as its normal offerings to Baptist Associations.

Liberty Baptist Church belonged to the Newfound Association until joining French Broad Association in September of 1993.

Changes to the original church structure over the years include: Sunday School wings began in 1952; New furnace, carpet, paneling, and new windows in 1967; and on May 23, 1984, the vote was approved for bricking the outside and new insulation. The plans for a parsonage were voted

on in December 1990 and by February 1991 the parsonage was ready and insurance purchased.

The improvements made in 1967 were made possible by Rev. Sam Austin's request that he receive no salary as pastor.

Many faithful pastors and members have served Liberty Baptist Church through the years and the church stands and serves as a witness to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

❖ Little Creek Baptist Church ❖



Little Creek First Baptist Church was organized in 1875 by J.F. Justice of Little Creek road. Mr. Justice was born in Henderson County and moved to Madison County. He was ordained into the full ministry in 1897. He was faithful to the church until his death on January 15, 1900.

The first pastor recorded was T.P. Briggs elected

in 1900. Our current pastor is Rev. James Ponder elected February 2, 1992.

Sunday School was started before 1900. It has always been an important part of Sunday services.

BTU was started in the 1940's. It was a great influence on the young people.

Little Creek has always supported Foreign and Home missions financially and with prayers.

The entire church has always taken part in the singing part of the service. The youth group has had a special group for many years.

The first meeting place of the church was in a one-room schoolhouse. In 1929, the church members bought land on Smith Creek Road to build a church. Rev. Sherman Ballard was elected pastor in the new church. Church services were held there until 1957. At that time a new church was built to replace the old one. Services were held in the new church in 1958. Rev. J.N. Watts preached the dedication service. Rev. Ed Penland was pastor.

The members of Little Creek have made many improvements on the church through the years. In 1979, we paved the church parking lot. In 1987, we added a fellowship building, which is now completed.

The church joined the association before 1900. We have supported the association financially, by attending the annual meetings, and with prayer.

Three ministers that have been ordained at Little Creek are:

Hal M. Helms ordained April 20, 1947, H.L. Wilson ordained June 16, 1968, and Cline Hensley, Jr. ordained September 23, 1975.

❖ Little Ivy Baptist Church ❖



In the early days of the statehood of N.C. a little group of Baptist Believers led by the Holy Spirit, met and organized the Little Ivy Baptist Church. The year was 1795. Some records show 1796. In 1806 the church joined the Holston Association and remained a member until 1807 when the French Broad Association was formed.

It is not known for a certainty just where the organization took place, but tradition says it was organized in a two-story log dwelling house on the farm which later became the property of John George. The church met in this house for some time then later moved to another house on Walker Branch Rd. Still later the church met in another house at what was known as the Double Springs.

It is not known who was the first pastor of the Little Ivy Church, but William Turner did preach at

Little Ivy. Not much is known of William Turner or his work other than he preached at Little Ivy. Rev. David Blackwell was probably the second pastor. Brother Snelson became pastor and continued until 1814. In October of 1814 Brother Moses Freeman was chosen to act as standing Moderator, or Pastor. Brother Freeman had been ordained by the church on August 8, 1812. Brother Freeman was chosen to act as moderator in the absence of Brother Snelson. This was just before the meeting of the association and was during the same time at which the delegates to the association were chosen. Brother Freeman resigned as pastor on May 5, 1827.

In November 1853 the church petitioned the Flag Pond church for James Hooker to supply the church for one year as assistant with Brother Whitt, but the record does not show if they served. About 1856 the church began electing two pastors to serve jointly and James Hooker and Robert Patterson were elected. James Hooker served until 1856.

Although the church has probably never been located more than three or four miles from its present location, it is worthy of note that it has belonged to two associations and has been located within the boundaries of four counties. When Little Ivy was organized, this section was a part of Burke County. Later in 1833 Yancy County was formed from part of Burke and Buncombe, and this became a part of Yancy. In 1851, Madison County was formed from part of Buncombe and Yancy and as a result, the church is now in Madison County.

The church seems to have built several houses

of worship. The first in 1831, land owned by the church was from John George for 1 acre located on what is now California Creek Road. There were probably three houses and an arbor built on this property.

In 1871 this land was exchanged with James Ramsey for 2 acres of land a few hundred yards from the old location. On this location in 1871-72 was erected a weather boarded house which stood until 1906. The next building stood until 1949 when the church was relocated on Highway 19-23 near the Burnsville intersection where it still stands.

The first service was held on September 10, 1946, with the Rev. Joe Sprinkle preaching. In 1985 a baptistry and choir loft were built, and later a building was bought for a fellowship hall.

Presently the church has 165 members. The Rev. Eugene Edwards is pastor.

Locust Grove Baptist Church



During the late 1880's as more families began to move into the Locust Grove community, the people felt a need for a local place of worship. They had already been conducting Sunday School "on the ridge" for a time. Therefore, on January 19, 1891 brothers and sisters from Flat Creek Baptist Church and Gabriel's Creek Baptist Church met at 10:00 AM at the Locust Grove School House located on Old Locust Grove Road, now known as Pickens to organize a church and call it Locust Grove Baptist Church. They elected Rev. Andrew Jackson Sprinkle as their first pastor. Ben F. Buckner and E. Jefferson Roberts were recognized as the first deacons. The new congregation agreed to meet on the second Saturday and Sunday of each month at 11:00 AM. The first collection amounted to \$3.87.

The first baptizing was held August 9, 1891 to baptize Arry and Mattie Roberts. Baptisms conducted during the early years were held in a baptismal pool at the home of E.J. Roberts. They were later held in Chandler Branch and Palmer Ford until a baptismal pool was installed in the church many years later. The first ordination service to ordain Solomon E. Arrowood and Phillip M. Buckner as deacons was held December 12, 1891. The first revival started the next day and lasted several days resulting in three conversions. The first obituary written was that of Calvin Burrell and was read Saturday, August 11, 1894. The first of only two or three foot washing services was held on Sunday, May 10, 1896.

Locust Grove Baptist Church joined the Buncombe Baptist Association in August, 1891. On August 7, 1897 we withdrew from that association and joined the French Broad Baptist Association.

On Saturday, March 12, 1898, the church voted to build a sanctuary on land donated by Deacon E.J. Roberts at the present location on Locust Grove Road. The first church building was a small white weather-boarded structure with a belfry, wood shingles, and three multi-paned windows on each side. Two doors entered the building, one for men and one for the women. The house was lit by kerosene lamps and heated by a wood stove. The interior of the church was unpainted wood with simple handmade wooden pulpit and pews. The first service was held May 1, 1898.

By 1908 the church had grown to 112 members. A need for a church cemetery was apparent.

Therefore, in October, 1908, they purchased land adjacent to the church property from E.J. Roberts for the sum of \$15.00.

During those early years, several important church organizations were started. The WMU began around 1918 and was active until the early 1980's. Training Union began a few years later but is also inactive now.

By the early 1930's, the original church building had begun to deteriorate and the membership had outgrown the structure. On September 4, 1934, the members voted to build a new church building out of concrete blocks. These blocks were made one at a time by the members of the church. The belfry was at the left of the building and concrete steps led to double doors entering the vestibule. Two pot-bellied stoves, one on each side of the sanctuary provided heat. The kerosene lamps continued to provide light until electricity became available in 1946. A tin roof covered the building and a cistern provided water. After five years of hard work, the new church building was dedicated on November 19, 1939.

The first Homecoming service mentioned in the records was June 13, 1935. The second Sunday in June has been set aside for Homecoming ever since with dinner served after the worship service.

In July, 1943, Miss Laura Mae Hilliard, the associational missionary, was a guest of Locust Grove Baptist Church. During the week she held Vacation Bible School for the first time.

On July 22, 1945, the church voted to have preaching on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. Fifth Sunday night singing began

September 1951. Wednesday night Bible Study was started on November 11, 1951. Both services have continued to this day.

On January 13, 1952, the church voted to install the first baptismal pool inside the church and a water system. The new annex including the baptismal pool was dedicated June 6, 1954. Between 1956 and 1964 many renovations and additions to the church building itself changed the looks drastically. The church was enlarged, the baptistry was moved to its present location, a choir loft was added and a new front porch. The whole structure was bricked and the roof shingled. The ladies of the church also worked to make improvements. The Adult Ladies' Sunday School class held quilting parties, then sold the quilts to buy the first carpet installed in the church and started a fund for the first organ.

The late sixties and early seventies saw more renovations with the driveways and parking lots being paved, the existing blue windows and air conditioning installed in the sanctuary.

On February 28, 1971, the church voted to buy three more acres of land to extend the cemetery. On February 20, 1975, they also voted to build a Fellowship Hall. Most of the labor was donated by the men of the church, and the Fellowship Hall was dedicated May 29, 1977 with a special service.

On June 28, 1981 the church voted to build a parsonage near the church. The three-bedroom, two bath brick home was completed and dedicated May 2, 1982.

The early 1980's saw a tremendous increase in attendance, therefore, on February 2, 1983, the

church voted to build classrooms, storage rooms, and two new restrooms in the basement of the fellowship hall. All work was done by the members. A sound system was installed in September, 1983 and a Tape Ministry for the shut-ins was started in 1985.

Having grown from 23 members in 1891 to about 300 in attendance each Sunday morning in 1987, it was again necessary to build on to the sanctuary. Two wings adding room for about 150 more people were added in 1987 along with a handicap ramp. More parking spaces were created across the road from the church.

In 1989 two more bedrooms and one bathroom were built in the basement of the parsonage making a total of five bedrooms and three bathrooms in the parsonage.

A tradition of serving our senior citizens lunch in the fellowship hall on the second Wednesday of each month began in 1990. It is our way of saying "Thank You" for their faithfulness and dedication to the Lord.

July, 1990 saw the start of a three-story addition to the back of the fellowship hall to increase storage space and add much-needed classrooms, a new nursery, and a conference room for the pastor. As with most of the building projects over the years, most of the work was done by the men of the church.

We give all praise to God for everything that has been accomplished during the past 100+ years, for each soul that has been saved, each heart that has been blessed or comforted, each life that has been changed. We look forward to more blessings as we abide in HIM until His coming.

❖ Long Branch Baptist Church ❖



On December 13, 1900, Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church was organized with Rev. A.J. Sprinkle being the first Pastor. They met on Saturday and the First Sunday of each month. The services were held in Long Branch School House until a church was built. Charter members were from surrounding communities, Laurel Branch, Bull Creek, Gabriels Creek, Oak Grove, Big Pine and Macedonia Baptist Church. There were 34 members when the church was organized.

On August 3, 1901 the church elected its first delegates to the French Broad Baptist Association.

In 1911 a committee was formed to look out a building site to build a church. A finance committee was appointed, trustees elected, and on August 20, 1921 the church voted to move the church and appointed committees to raise money for land and

investigate the title. On February 18, 1922, a report of moving the church house was made and adopted. Later a collection was taken and the building committee was directed to finish the church house since it had been moved. The building was dedicated on October 14, 1922.

Long Branch Church was involved in missions with canvassing of the neighborhood to raise money for a starving Europe. In 1923 the treasure was instructed to give whatever money was on hand to the Foreign Missions, State Missions and the Orphanage.

In July 1930 a soul stirring revival was held resulting in 46 conversions and 23 additions to the church.

In 1936 the church adopted its first budget. During the 1940's much was accomplished at Long Branch: A mission offering was taken on the first Sunday of each month, a parking lot was built, a piano was purchased. Service flags were bought for the boys in service.

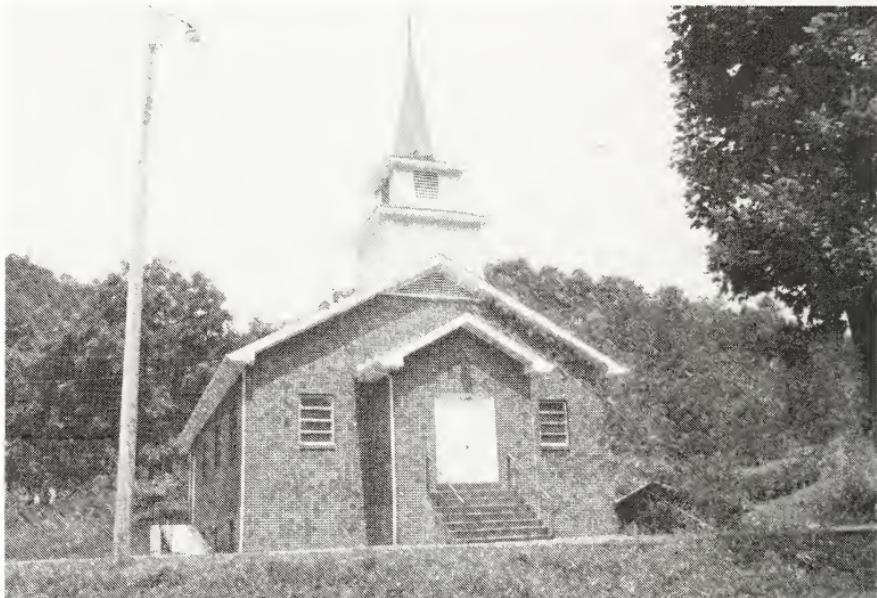
In 1951 a new budget plan was adopted and a vote to remodel the church was approved. In June 1953 the work was started on a new church building. The first service was held in the new building April 10, 1955. Restrooms were installed in 1958. The new building was dedicated on June 21, 1959. During the 60's and 70's more work was done on the building with a porch, rails and handicap ramp. A baptistry and three classrooms were added in 1976. In 1979 the church was bricked. In 1989 a fellowship hall was built and dedicated.

Through the years missions has been an impor-

tant part of the Long Branch Baptist Church. They organized WMU with Baptist Women, Acteens, GA's and Missions Friends, often taking part in the associational organizations. In 1960 a Brotherhood and RA's chapter were organized.

The church continues to grow spiritually under the leadership of Pastor Steve Honeycutt.

❖ Lower Big Pine Baptist Church ❖



The Lower Big Pine Missionary Baptist Church was established in 1902. The church building at that time was located up on the hill behind the present building. The old building was a small, white, one-story building with hardwood floors and heated with a wood stove. It was not until 1959 that the present church building was constructed. Many changes have occurred since it was constructed, such as: the basement was poured with

concrete and classrooms built, indoor plumbing and restrooms added, new light fixtures and windows were installed, carpet, paneling, a water cooler, padded church pews, central air conditioning added to the inside, and outside the church, the roof has been reshingled, new gutters installed, vinyl siding added to the soffett and belfry, new church signs added, handicap access ramp built, outdoor carpet for the steps and ramp installed, and the church parking area paved.

Our church has been a member of the New Found Baptist Association since 1902. Many members of the church have taken an active part in the association, with several members holding officer positions over the years. Most recently our pastor, Danny Little, served as vice-moderator for the past few years, and church treasurer, Michael Worley, served as Associational clerk/treasurer for the last nine years. However, early in 1944, our church joined the French Broad Baptist Association, when the New Found Baptist Association closed.

Pastors that have served the church during the years are: R.H. Hipps, E.R. Treadway, P.T. McFee, Bailey B. Plemmons, T.J. Graham, J.R. Cogdill, O.J. Frisbee, R.L Carlton, W.B. Sprinkle, Perry Sprinkle, Wiley Graham, Everett Cable, Dewey Rogers and Danny E. Little. Rev. Danny E. Little, Pastor, has served the church since 1977, or for seventeen years.

Mrs. Mary B. Worley has served the church as clerk for twenty-eight years, twenty-six of those consecutively.

Currently, the church has worship services on Sunday and Prayer Meeting on Wednesday

nights. There are Sunday School classes for the beginners, middlers, youth, young adults, adult men and adult women. At the end of every thirteen weeks, the beginner and middler Classes present a program for the entire church of what they have learned in Sunday School. They are then given an achievement certificate for completion, attendance and a special prize for their accomplishments. The church has a current membership enrollment of 139, with an average weekly attendance of 64.

❖ Lusk Chapel Baptist Church ❖



The first church was built on land owned by John Sidney Lusk, hence the name Lusk Chapel. The original church was located near the site of the present church.

A meeting was held on February 10, 1889 for the purpose of organizing a church. Most of the original members came from The Flats of Spring Creek or Mount Pleasant Church. The meeting started with a sermon. With a call for members, the following people became the charter members: John M. Carver, Elizabeth Carver, J.M. Plemmons, J.M. Coward, John Plemmons, Harriet Case, J.D. Case, M.M. Plemmons, N.A. Coward, H.E. Duckett, and V.J. Gentry.

The Articles of Faith were read and adopted, then the Church Covenant was read and adopted. John M. Carver was elected as the church clerk. J.M. Carver, J.M. Coward, and J.M. Plemmons were elected as a committee to find a place to build a church.

The second meeting was held on March 16, 1889. At this meeting a building committee was appointed. The committee was J.M. Plemmons, J.M. Coward and J.M. Carver.

By the end of 1889 the membership of Lusk Chapel Baptist Church numbered 14.

In February 1890 the first two deacons were elected, J.D. Case and J.M. Coward.

In 1892 a total of nine were baptized.

In January of 1895 Lusk Chapel licensed its first preacher, W.R. Early.

Sunday night prayer meetings were started in September 1900.

A two week revival led by the Rev. T.J. Graham in 1909 resulted in 42 souls receiving Christ. Another two week revival led by the Rev. T.J. Graham in 1913 resulted in 30 souls receiving Christ.

In June 1946 Ball City Church was organized from Lusk Chapel.

In 1959 the decision was made to install a heating system in the church.

In 1982 a Youth Group was started with 6 children and in 6 weeks the group had grown to 40. The Youth Group raised a large portion of the money for the classroom addition. The group traveled extensively over Western North Carolina to put on musical programs as a witness for the Lord.

In 1983 the classroom addition was built.

❖ Madison Seminary Baptist Church ❖



Madison Seminary Baptist Church has a rich heritage spanning over 103 years. Initially, even as a school she offered a spiritual sanctuary and Christian service to the community. Since November 10, 1889 when the first meeting was begun by

Elder J.A. Bradley, many people have been blessed. Nineteen people were baptized following two weeks of services. After this series of meetings on November 22, 1889, Mr. Bradley presided over a meeting of discussion to organize a "religious work." On December 14, 1889, L.M. Bryan acted as clerk and W.P. Jervis was appointed to prepare a church covenant and articles of faith. Shortly afterwards, a large group of people met and organized a Missionary Baptist Church which was named Madison Seminary. The church covenant was read and adopted. J.A. Bradley was elected as pastor and B.T. Chandley was elected clerk. The church had services in a new building on May 23, 1926 with Rev. H.L. Smith as pastor.

During the next twenty years Madison Seminary grew and continued to bless the community. In 1949, Rev. E.J. Jenkins was called as pastor and felt a need to live in the community. There being no housing at that time, prompted the construction of the church parsonage, which was completed in 1950. Several years later in 1955, there was a need for more space for fellowships and other activities. During Rev. E.J. Hall's leadership as pastor, the fellowship hall was built. As this congregation continued to grow and prosper, a new church was built adjacent to the old church. The first service was held on July, 1967, with Rev. J.J. Slagle as pastor.

The strength of the church was evident in the community the next several years. Attendance in Bible study and worship services resulted in filled classrooms and sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Numerous programs were begun:

WMU, Brotherhood, RA's, GA's, Sunbeams, a Youth Choir, etc.

The 100th Anniversary was observed on October 9, 1989 with a Homecoming. Rev. Harrell Wood was the speaker. Madison Seminary continues to minister to the needs of the community.

❖ Mars Hill Baptist Church ❖



Mars Hill Baptist Church was constituted as Pleasant Hill Baptist Church on June 28, 1856. On that date twenty-six people living in the area surrounding the French Broad Baptist Institute met in the first college building to organize a new church. Under the guidance of Elders Robert Patterson, James Hooker, and Leroy Sams, they elected a moderator and clerk and set Edward Carter and John Keith "apart" for the office of deacon. It was then ordered that the constitution be drawn after the

form of the constitution of Little Ivy Baptist Church. Robert Patterson was chosen to be the first pastor. Church meetings, it was determined, would be held on the fourth Saturday and Sunday of each month. It was at the meeting in September 1860 that the congregation voted to change the name of the church to Mars Hill Baptist Church. This was one year after the French Broad Baptist Institute had been rechartered as Mars Hill College.

During its early years the church was a small, weak congregation with little money to support a pastor and other necessary expenses. Moreover, the Civil War with its demands for men and materials struck before the church had time to become well established. John Ammons, in his history of the French Broad Association, states that the Mars Hill Church was almost annihilated by the War. It is not strange then that it was thirty-one years before the congregation was able to build its own church house. Meanwhile, they had continued to meet in homes, or in the first college building until it was ravaged by troops during the War.

Finally in 1887 they erected a wooden structure on a lot donated by A.O. Carter. Unfortunately, the building was poorly constructed and in 1907 it was declared unsafe. Again, the church returned to college buildings for its services. In April 1918, after eleven years of being homeless, the congregation moved into a new brick structure erected on the site from which the older one had been removed. A parsonage had also been built on an adjoining lot. Money was still scarce and it was more than a decade before the debt for these buildings was paid off.

With a growing student body at the college and a gradual increase in the local population, the new building was soon outgrown. Again, the church was forced to use college buildings for most of its Sunday School classes. When an improved economy followed WWII, the congregation, under the leadership of Pastor Lowell F. Sodoman, voted to build a more adequate facility. In 1954 they moved into the church they now occupy. The new structure included offices, classrooms and meeting rooms on three floors, also a small auditorium, kitchen, and recreation facilities on the ground floor, in all more than sixty rooms. With furnishings the building cost \$338,000. The State Convention contributed \$95,000 toward the cost. Mars Hill College bought the old church house and parsonage for \$40,000 and made an additional contribution of \$10,000. Members of the congregation bought bonds and the debt was soon liquidated. At the time there were 350 resident and 463 student members.

As referred to earlier, finances were a problem for many years. As late as 1896 the pastor's annual salary was only \$250 and the total gifts for all purposes was \$322.50. The first collection for anything other than local expenses is recorded in the minutes for October 26, 1869. According to that statement "five dollars was sent to Brother Mills for the Orphanage," in order to "make a call for means of support for missionary purposes" once a month; and in 1893 a second resolution called on the Church to do more for mission work and asked every member to "do his part." Soon after the passage of this resolution the Church set

specific dates for the collection of offerings for Home, State, and Foreign missions. In 1921 the Church initiated a budget system for financing expenditures and mission offerings were included.

As the years passed the church gradually expanded its ministries. In 1877, after several unsuccessful attempts, a Sunday School was established. In 1899 a Woman's Missionary Society was organized with the assistance of Pastor W. E. Wilkins. Miss Anne Peek was the first president. Ten years later a church training program for young people (BYPU) was added. In 1937 a Daily Vacation Bible School was held for children of all age levels.

During the late thirties Pastor William Lynch reorganized the worship services. Up until that time all services were very informal. Under Lynch's leadership Sunday worship services began to follow a planned order and to include special music. A choir was organized and a director elected for both adult and children's choirs. A new piano was purchased and a second-hand pipe organ bought from an old theater in Washington, D.C.

As the Church moved into its new facility, additional staff members were added to take care of the extended program. Irene Olive was employed as minister of education and Barbara Bennett as church secretary. In 1963 Sue Fitzgerald was employed as minister of education and a Board of Christian Education was set up to supervise the education program. A minister of music was later added to the staff. Woodrow W. (Jerry) Jarrell, the associate pastor, is currently filling both positions.

Mrs Jarrell is church organist. Recently college student interns have been employed part time to work with the local youth and with college students.

An outreach ministry for senior adults has also been added. The Senior Adult Council, representing six committees, plans and supervises this work. The committees carry out a visitation program for shut-ins and residents in nursing homes, provide a variety of activities for "Dynamic Adults" (those who are still active), distribute tapes of the Sunday morning worship services to shut-ins, and maintain a prayer chain to offer support for those experiencing crises in their lives.

Through a Board of Missions the Church supports mission organizations as well as its regular schedule of offerings for Home, Foreign, State, and Association missions, also a number of special mission projects. A clothes closet provides clothes and household items for several hundred people each year. Mission groups provide a weekly Bible study at Madison Manor Health Center. For three years youth groups have worked for a week each summer with the homeless in rescue missions in Atlanta. The church has sponsored a number of individuals to serve on mission projects in Poland, the Caribbean, Africa, and Brazil. The congregation also supports Madison County Habitat for Humanity, Neighbors in Need, the Crisis Center, and Hospice.

❖ Marshall First Baptist Church ❖



The Marshall Baptist Church has a rich heritage spanning over 156 years. She has a reputation for a strong, enduring faith during times of trying circumstances. She has continued, throughout her life, to offer spiritual sanctuary and Christian service to the community. Since her beginning in the 1830's, "The Old River Hill Baptist Church," as she was originally known, had many encounters with death. God and His people, however, would not let her die. She survived her building and property being sold, with the congregation left homeless prior to the Civil War. After a foundering period during the war and numerous meeting places, including the Old Madison County Courthouse, she was relocated in a permanent "house of worship" on Blannahassett Island. That building was virtually destroyed in a flood in 1876. She then

moved to the west end of Marshall and combined forces with the Methodists and Presbyterians as they worshiped together in the Union church. In 1903 she regained her independence in a home of her own when the Baptist membership purchased the property where our present church is located. The first service was held in September, 1905 and her name was known as "Marshall Baptist Church." Only six years later, January 28, 1912, her new home and its entire contents were destroyed by fire. There was no insurance and a tremendous financial loss. The 206 members, however, persevered and the church was entirely rebuilt the following year. In response to a need for more space and better facilities our present building was constructed in 1959. The members paid for the new structure within five years, holding an official "note-burning" ceremony February 2, 1964.

Our membership today recognizes with gratitude and awe the tremendous dedication and sacrifice our heritage bequeaths us. In 1980 the membership voted to change the church name to one they felt had been earned - "First Baptist Church."

The future of First Baptist Church is exciting to envision. In November 1989 with the purchase of property we have obtained the first stage in our dream for a bigger, stronger and more committed body of Christ.

Our church has had 47 pastors during its 156 year history. Some of these men have gone on to become college presidents, military chaplains, home missionaries, religious writers, evangelists, and pastors of larger churches.

❖ Middle Fork Baptist Church ❖



Middle Fork Baptist Church was founded in 1805. Daniel Carter is considered to be one of the founders of the church. A few years after its organization it joined the French Broad Baptist Association. The Middle Fork Baptist Church left the French Broad Association about 1828 and joined the Big Ivy Association. This Association grew during the years 1829-1848. Middle Fork Church experienced growth during this period.

In 1849 the two Associations reunited into the French Broad Association, and Middle Fork rejoined in 1850 and has been a leader in the Association since this time.

Church services were held on Saturday and Sunday of each month when the Circuit Rider came through. William Briggs was one of the Circuit Riders and was known to have preached at

Middle Fork. The preaching services usually lasted two hours and everyone was expected to attend.

The first meeting place was a log building located on land given by Johnny Briggs. The pews were split logs. This building was used until the 1870's when a new frame building was built on the same property. Kerosene lamps with reflectors lighted the building. Political elections were held in the church and enthusiastic voters or perhaps drunken guys, shot the wall full of holes. A weakening of the foundations led the congregation to start meeting in the school house which had been built at top level.

In 1908 a new church building was erected. Land for this building was donated by Ervin Buckner. This church was a one room frame building with a belfry and a bell. There were rows of pews and room for a choir was provided behind the pulpit. This building was used for nearly 40 years.

In 1952 when a new highway was built the church had to be moved. This church was built with community labor at a cost of \$17,000.00. It was a modern brick with a baptistry and Sunday School rooms. The first service was held on February 14, 1954, with the Rev. Charles Sprinkle officiating.

Sunday School became a part of Middle Fork's services sometime during the last half of the nineteenth century. In 1906 Middle Fork had 56 enrolled in Bible Study. The church had Sunday School every Sunday except for the winter months when weather and poor roads made attendance difficult.

Beginning in 1942 during the pastorate of Rev. Elzie Ray the church began to meet two Sundays out of the month for preaching services. In 1956 training union was instituted with an enrollment of 57. In 1956 preaching services began each Sunday. In 1960 a Woman's Missionary Union was organized with 12 members. This had been tried in 1928, but without success.

An interest in missions has set Middle Fork apart since 1850. It was one of the few churches pledging support for domestic missions. In recent years the support has grown and interest has expanded until all types of missions are now included in the annual budget.

Through the years Middle Fork has continued to grow. Land for a cemetery was purchased. The parking lot paved and a fellowship building was completed in 1985. While doing all this the church's budget and mission gifts have continued to grow.

The Middle Fork Baptist Church has always been a focal point in the community, establishing moral standards, setting an example for community service, and reaching out to lend a helping hand wherever and whenever the need should arise. Middle Fork Baptist Church has always been a leader among Baptists in this area.

❖ Mount Pleasant Baptist Church ❖



Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist church was first founded in 1850 as a Methodist Church. The exact date of change from Methodist to Baptist affiliation is not known to this writer. The following history was written by two of the oldest members, Tillie Baldwin Brown and Annie Plemmons.

There's a little white Church just over the top of Doggett Mountain located in Madison County. It has stood so gallantly over the years, it's almost as if it has its arms outstretched, inviting the lost to come. I have seen many souls saved under its shelter.

I have gone to school there, as it was used also as a school through the 7th grade. Many times when storms were raging, I have seen the lightning flash and heard the thunder roll, but you could always feel safe inside, as though you were in the Shepherd's fold.

Mount Pleasant Church was built by Uncle Mitt Meadows and Loranza Hipps in the year of 1911. The sills of this little structure were hand hewn with a hand ax, by Uncle Mitt Meadows.

The property was given by Guss and Mollie Penland, sister and brother-in-law of my father, James Belton Baldwin. There was no water on the Church property and Henry and Bertie Penland gave the land with the spring on it. This property ran along the old upper road around to the old "corner rock", where the "stock-law gate" (The Homestead law provided that cattle and stock could run "free" on one side of the gate, and on the other side of the gate, the cattle and farm stock had to be fenced) crossed the road.

Willie Plemmons, my brother-in-law, donated the Church bell, which is still in use today. He ordered the bell from Sears-Roebuck catalog. Merrimon Plemmons, brother-in-law of my mother and father, James and Mollie Baldwin, built the Church steeple and the bell tower.

Before the Church was built, the people in the community of Trust and Freezeland had Church and Sunday school in a little cabin they called Julian Chapel. It was located close to the house that now stands where Stephen and Sallie Coward used to live. (The Commodore-Wells property.)

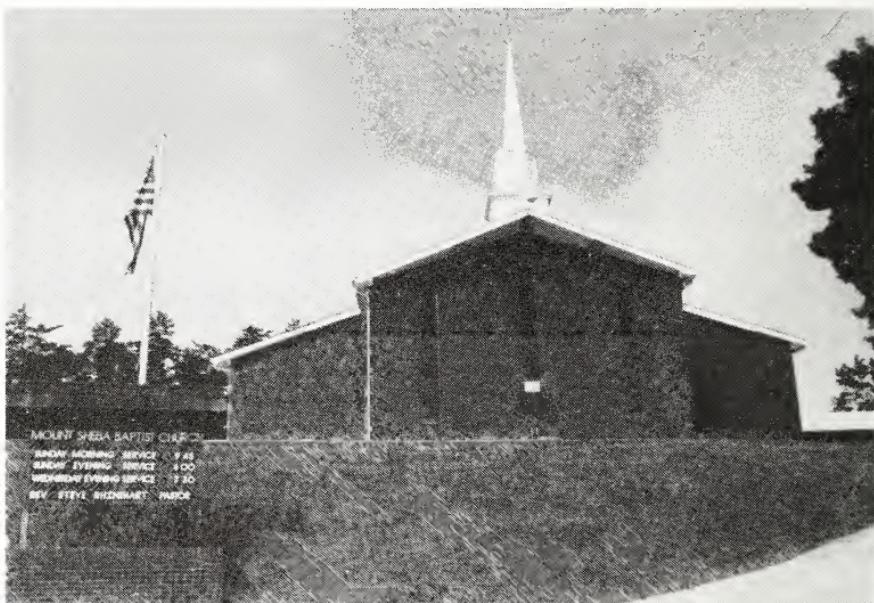
My father, James B. Baldwin, was minister of music, and had a small choir of children, called "Missionary Band". The church used the "shape note" method of singing, but some "round note" singing was used also.

Sometime in the fifties or sixties, the current building was moved from its rock foundation, the

property graded and a basement dug which the building was subsequently placed upon.

Other details are not readily available and the once full church has slowly dwindled to a handful of faithful members dedicated to reviving the faith and commitment that has made this small chapel a part of the Hot Springs community for over 140 years. Pray with us for these continuing efforts.

❖ Mount Sheba Baptist Church ❖



In the summer of 1935 a small group of Christian people living in the Monticello-New Stock Road area in Weaverville, with a zeal to worship the Lord, met together to discuss the need to find a suitable place to hold worship services. Due to the hardships and depression at that time, they had not been able to build a church.

They held services in an old store house, then in

a small school building near the present Mt. Sheba Baptist Church. The church was organized under the name of Maple Grove but did not apply for membership in the French Broad Association.

On June 14, 1936 the members met for the purpose of organizing a Baptist church under the leadership of the Baptist Association to the French Broad Baptist Association. Rev. Henry Rice was elected their pastor. At their second meeting, a building committee was appointed to start procedures for the construction of a church. In-laws of the Rev. Alfred Bradley donated 1/2 acre on February 1, 1937 at the lower side of the present Mt. Sheba cemetery. During this meeting it was decided the new church be called Mount Sheba.

Construction of the church by the members started by donations of trees, used lumber, lumber from a saw mill, and money raised by the members in various ways. Finally, after long and hard work, Mount Sheba Baptist Church had its first meeting in the building on Saturday, August 14, 1937.

On April 24, 1944 a deed for 1 acre of land joining the property was made to Mount Sheba by W.D. Sprinkle.

In a business meeting on April 11, 1953, the members voted to build a new church. The first service in the new building was January 2, 1955.

In later years improvements had been made in the building such as new pews, belfry, new furnace, etc., but also the spiritual growth and additions to the church grew.

During those years brick was added to the church, plaster to the walls, extending the stage in front, and buying a new piano. In June 1966, a new

well was dug which laid the ground work for a baptistry, restrooms, and stairs to the basement. April 25, 1971 it was decided to build a brick fellowship building. Over a period of nine years, as money permitted, the building was finished with an equipped kitchen and Sunday School rooms in the basement.

As Mt. Sheba grew, the need for its pastor to be in the community became apparent. The search for land on which to build a parsonage was started. Five acres was purchased in April 1982 just down the road from the church. In 1982 air conditioning was added to the church. April 1983 the first construction of the parsonage was started. Construction was done mostly by volunteers. The parsonage was completed in October 1983 with a floor space of 2,017 sq. ft. In May 1984 74/100's of an acre was bought joining the church property for parking. The church voted July 29, 1984, to buy an acre of land joining the church property.

In January 1985, Rev. Charles Rogers resigned and Rev. Steve Rhinehart was elected the sixteenth pastor in October 1985 and is still preaching the gospel at Mount Sheba. April 28, 1987 it was decided the church be completely remodeled on the inside adding more room to the back of the building, having exposed beams, a new baptistry, new class rooms down stairs, 2 new bathrooms, new carpet and padded pews, pulpit, lighting, and air-conditioning. Air-conditioning was also added to the fellowship building in August 1988. It was voted June 1990 to connect the church and fellowship building seeing the need of a larger fellowship building. This also provided a new entrance, 2

more bathrooms, carpet and remodeling the fellowship building. Lights were placed behind the exposed beams over the choir in December 1991 to be used for Christmas plays, etc.

Through the years Mount Sheba has contributed to many missions and missionaries. They give very actively to each one knowing God's work can only be carried out through Christians who give of their tithe, time and prayers. Mount Sheba has helped in money being sent to Honduras, Jack Pot, Idaho, India, etc. They have donated money for the Associational offices and buildings. Mount Sheba's mission work here at home is very important with weekly visitations, handing out tracts, Bibles to new converts, Bible School, radio broadcastings, hurricane of '89 funds, help to the needy children for Christmas, and the great work of the Christian women who serve for the elderly, lost loved one's families, and church gatherings. Dedicated Christian men have given of their time, money, and labor freely with the knowledge that only God can provide and reward each one with the lost souls He brings into His family.

Mt. Sheba Baptist Church has grown from a little church of 14 charter members to 357 on the active roll. We give Him the praise and glory He so richly deserves for how much this church has prospered in the years from 1935 to 1992, not only in land and building, but in spiritual growth and membership.

❖ North Fork Baptist Church ❖



The North Fork Baptist Church was organized in 1867 in the home of Absolem Buckner. The church met in the home until a log building was built on the North Fork of Big Pine Creek. North Fork Baptist Church (older members referred to the church as "The Baptist Church of Big Pine at North Fork") belonged to the Newfound Baptist Association from 1867 until 1958 when they joined the French Broad Association.

In 1885 land was donated by Lucretia Sawyer and a building committee appointed to plan the new building. On this committee was R.S. Wild, G.G. Tweed and J.N. Gentry. The building was to be used for both a school and a church.

In 1903 the church divided the church and school land and sold the church house to the Board of Education for a school house, although it

appears to have been used for church services as well. The building burned and the church met in a barn belonging to G.W. Wild until a new building could be built.

In March 1906 the church voted to build the new church on the site where the old church stood. The new modern church included classrooms, and a baptistry.

This building still stands today; however, the outside plank walls were replaced with brick in 1978. An oil furnace was installed in 1949. Modern restrooms were built, pews upholstered and floors carpeted. Although these and other changes have been made, the original high wooden ceiling along with several stained glass windows and wooden paneling on certain walls still exist to illustrate the craftsmanship of the early builders and their dedication to the church.

The format of church meetings has changed since the beginning of the church in 1867. Although Sunday School services were held each week, the church met for regular preaching services on the first and third Sunday of each month. Business meetings were held on the first Saturday of each month. Business of the church included granting of letters, opening doors of the church to receive new members, or preferring charges against wayward members.

Other business transactions included such items as the appointment of a committee to investigate whether or not to allow men to play base ball on the grounds. In 1901 the church voted that strange preachers would not be allowed to go in the stand to preach without their credentials or with-

out knowing something about them. It was also during business meetings that collections of food and money were taken for the needy of the community. Donations for the Red Cross were taken and in 1943 collections were made to buy presents for soldiers. Vegetables, apples and canned goods were collected for the orphanage.

Revival services were normally 2 weeks in length with two services per day. In addition to revival services the church met for memorial services. In July 1937 the memorial service began with singing and prayer at the church. Members then went to the cemetery to decorate the graves, then came back to the church for more preaching and singing and dinner on the ground.

Church finances have also changed drastically. In 1882 A.N. Gentry was paid 4 bushels and 3 pecks of corn for his services as sexton. In 1890 the Foreign Missions Offering was \$1.70. A total of \$12.80 was collected for the pastor, Tom J. Graham, in July 1911 for six months of service. Pastors were not paid salaries until recently, but the weekly offering was given to the pastor.

Membership in the church was approximately twenty-one members when the church was organized in 1867. By 1881 total membership was 81. Now there are 118 members with the average weekly attendance of 49.

Ѡ Oak Grove Baptist Church ዓ



The people of Oak Grove community met on August 20, 1939, to organize the Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church. They met in the Oak Grove School building, a one-room building, located on what was then known as Hunter Branch Road. The "Church Covenant" and "Articles of Faith" were read. All those who wished to organize the said church, in said community, of same faith and belief, presented their letters of recommendation.

There were thirty-one charter members coming from Long Branch, Jupiter, Gabriel's Creek, Bull Creek, and Cullowhee Baptist churches. Rev. Guy West was elected as the first pastor. The following were ordained as deacons: P.A. Fisher, Byron Roberts, Joe Sams, Wade Hunter, and Clarence Fox. In July of 1940, the church applied for member-

ship to the French Broad Baptist Association and elected delegates to serve.

A committee was appointed to raise funds for the construction of a new church building. In December of 1940, another committee was appointed to select a place to build a church. It was approved by the members that Oak Grove School building be purchased from Madison County Board of Education for the purpose of erecting a church building. In 1946 the school building and property were found to be too small, and were swapped for the present site of Oak Grove Church, located on what is now known as Oak Grove Road, from Mr. Alphonso Watkins.

Land for a cemetery was donated by Mr. George Green and Mr. J.O. Rice in 1948. On Sunday morning September 24, 1950, the church was dedicated to God. Former pastors, visitors, members and charter members were recognized. After service, lunch was served. After the "History" and "Spiritual Growth" of the church was read, a sermon and singing followed. The annual decoration and homecoming was set permanently for the second Sunday in July each year.

As the church grew, classrooms were added in 1953 and new chairs and tables were purchased for the rooms in 1955. At this time the church organized a training union. Rev. and Mrs. David Roberts, missionaries for the French Broad Association at that time, came to help organize the training union.

In 1956, the church adopted a budget and beginning with the new church year in 1957, a

pastor was elected on a full time basis. Preaching had previously been twice each month.

The annual Fisher-Fox reunion was held at Oak Grove the first Sunday in September with special singing and speakers. The reunion is now alternately held at Oak Grove and Long Branch churches each year.

The church also adopted a WMU organization as a permanent auxiliary of the church in 1957, followed by adopting the Girls Auxiliary of the WMS in 1959.

In April of 1961, a fellowship hall or community building was built on the church grounds. As time passed, many changes, improvements and renovations were made to the church and community building.

A cemetery ordinance was adopted for the church members in 1974, with amendments being made in 1978, 1980, 1982, 1984, and 1989.

Once again, an addition to the church was needed by 1975. Extra classrooms and an addition to the sanctuary were added. An expansion of the pulpit area allowed room for the installation of a baptistry in 1977. The church was bricked and a steeple raised also. A choir loft was built and new pews were purchased and installed in 1981.

On December 5, 1982, the community building was dedicated. Lunch was served after the service.

The Brotherhood organization was organized in May of 1975, and the RA's were adopted in September of 1985.

Since Oak Grove Church was organized, six members have answered the call to preach the

gospel and have been ordained. Others were called to missionary work.

Oak Grove has grown to a resident membership of 202 and a nonresident membership of 37.

Ѡ Oak Hill Baptist Church Ѡ



Built on a hilltop in Madison County, Oak Hill Baptist Church has served the spiritual needs of Rector Corner Community since 1932. The church was built when the people of Rector Corner felt a need for a conveniently located place to worship. The church was nondenominational until joining the French Broad Baptist Association in 1939.

Originally called Oak Ridge, the name was changed to prevent confusion with another church in the French Broad Association.

A total of seventeen pastors and seventeen

deacons have served Oak Hill in the ensuing years. The names of five charter members are recorded on the old church book.

Vaughn Fisher was the first pastor of Oak Hill. Maye Huey Reese was the first church clerk. Mrs. Reese was also a charter member of Oak Hill. Mitchell Shelton, Mrs. John Sherlin and Joe and Vergie Bishop were the five charter members of Oak Hill. Mace Honeycutt is the current pastor of Oak Hill.

Oak Hill was originally within a few hundred feet of a one-room school called Skyland. The church had no bell. This was not acceptable to the "ladies of the church." A box supper was undertaken to raise money. Subsequently, Skyland School was closed and the church bought the bell from the Board of Education. It still hangs in the steeple.

An interesting occurrence took place at Oak Hill in 1981. The church only owns a small triangle of ground upon which the building is located. On the west and north sides of the church is a state road. To the east is a privately owned access road. To the south is a cemetery. Thus no availability to water and no place to drill a well.

The church felt a need for a baptistry. Money was saved and a contractor was found to build the baptistry. All this was accomplished. No water. The first time the baptistry was used, members carried water in plastic jugs to fill it. Faith—blind maybe—in action.

The church has tried many times, before and after the baptistry incident, to buy property near the church, but have not found anyone who wished to sell. Church members, Larry and Shelia West,

generously allowed the church to tap on to their well. Stewardship in action.

It is doubtful people who attended Oak Hill sixty years ago would recognize the building today. The church has been changed many times to adapt to changing needs of the congregation.

Oak Hill is still small in terms of physical size and in membership. However, the spirit and tone in which Oak Hill was created prevails today. It is a shelter, a refuge, and a place of safety to those of us who attend Oak Hill. We pray these things will be true forever!

❖ Oak Ridge Baptist Church ❖



The Oak Ridge Baptist Church was organized February 1, 1917, in the Alexander community. In the early church history we read of all night meetings, old timey footwashings, etc. However, in the

early history we can see how God so beautifully worked in peoples lives and hearts, just as He still is doing today at Oak Ridge.

Interesting facts of our early church history are, offerings ranged from \$5.00 to around \$10.00. The first collection recorded for the pastor was \$9.17. In those days, times were hard and money scarce but God supplied all our needs and community needs also. We read of supporting orphanages and missionaries. If someone in the community had a need, whether their home had burned, there had been a death in the family or someone was just out of a job and couldn't feed their family, Oak Ridge was there to help by the grace of God.

In the old church building a stove stood in the middle of the floor. People kicked off their shoes and shouted around it when the sweet spirit of the Lord was felt. There was no water or plumbing. Baptism was always conducted at the local creek.

Oak Ridge joined the Association in 1918.

The new church building was built in 1976 with our first service being held June 20, 1976. The fellowship hall was built in 1979 and the parsonage in 1981.

Our current pastor, Larry Sprouse originally joined our church, was set aside and ordained into the ministry by Oak Ridge. It has been said "We grow our own"; however, Oak Ridge gives God all the glory for every blessing He has given us especially for our pastor.

Through the years things have changed little as far as helping each other and the community. When a real need occurs, Oak Ridge can be found saying "What can we do"? Whether praying, deliv-

ering food to a family who has lost a loved one, supporting financially or just being there when needed as in the early days, God gives us grace to meet those needs.

In the recent years, Oak Ridge has been involved in many activities that have helped us grow spiritually, such as:

Christmas Plays: The last several years the young people, with some assistance, have written, directed and conducted their own plays. In addition to presenting the play twice a season at Oak Ridge, the play has also been presented at the Juvenile Evaluation Center in Swannanoa. Another Christmas activity our youth enjoys is participating with a float in Christmas parades in Asheville, Marshall and Weaverville.

North Buncombe Youth Crusade: Oak Ridge has participated in this community function for the past four years. All the churches in the community come together for three nights for a joint youth crusade. We enjoy good fellowship, good preaching, good spirit and lots of fun.

JEC Ministry: The Juvenile Evaluation Center in Swannanoa is a place where children ages 9-18 are kept due to some type of crime committed. Oak Ridge has a monthly volunteer program and have worked in Bible School with these youths for the past five years.

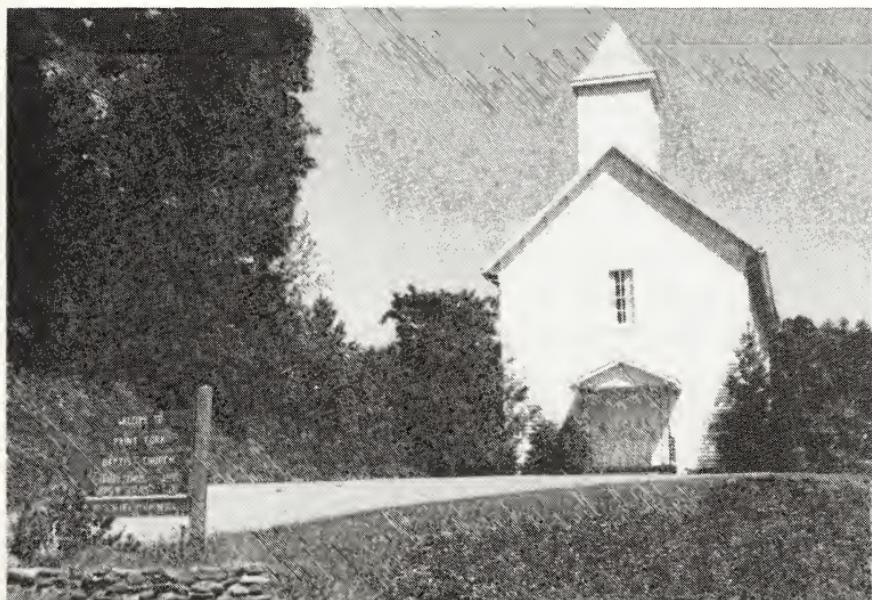
Gideon Ministry: Oak Ridge has three men who are Gideons. These men pass out Bibles, speak in prisons and other churches concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tape Ministry: Several ladies at Oak Ridge deliver tapes weekly to the sick and shut-ins in the

community. This has been a special blessing not only to those receiving the tapes but to those delivering. It helps our members who are unable to attend church to know what is happening.

From 1917 to 1992, Oak Ridge has grown in spirit, number and grace. Through all of this we can look back and say neither we ourselves, nor our forefathers, have done anything except by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who did it all on Calvary, and only through Him can we see Oak Ridge for what it is today.

¤ Paint Fork Baptist Church ¤



The Paint Fork Baptist Church is located on the Paint Fork Road, approximately 10 miles northeast of Mars Hill, N.C. The meeting house is a two-story, white, wood frame building with portico and belfry. The lumber for the building, inside and

outside, was hand dressed. The sanctuary has the original hand-made pews, and a pulpit which was hand made by a former pastor, Rev. James A. Corn.

In the year 1882 the land for the church building was deeded to trustees by J.H. Carter and Nelson Anderson for the purpose of both Methodist and Baptist establishing a church for each denomination of community (a union building).

The Baptist Church was organized March 2nd, 1883, by the following brethren: Rev. T.M. Honeycutt of Mars Hill was called to assist and act as moderator of the meeting. The faith and covenant was read by Rev. Honeycutt and adopted by the church. Rev. William Briggs was elected pastor, D.W. Angel, secretary, and J.E. Radford, clerk. The church voted that members be received from other churches.

The church was first called Terries Fork Baptist Church after the original Baptist church on Terries Fork, located about one mile away.

A history of the Baptist Church was not recorded from 1883 to 1888.

There is no record of the Methodist Church, but it existed until about 1930. The Methodist Minister preached two Sundays a month and the Baptist Minister, two Sundays a month. Each faith attended every Sunday and there was no separation in Sunday School. Most of the older Methodist congregation members remained until their death or moved their membership to another Methodist Church and the younger generation joined the Baptist Church. However, one Methodist member remained with the Baptist - Zeb Angel, who was 88 years old at the time of his death in 1965.

Beginning the first of the year 1888, Rev. William Bradley was elected pastor. He did a successful work, baptizing quite a number and received many by letter from Terries Fork, Middle Fork, Paint Gap and Yancey County.

The Church could never have seen the spiritual accomplishments that it has if it had not been for the leadership of some of our forefathers. Mr. Elbert Radford served as superintendent for more than 15 years. Mr. Willie B. Metcalf served as church clerk 37 years, and his faithful wife, Bell, was always at service in prayer. Mr. Jim Corn served the church as pastor for 28 years. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Angel served faithfully at Paint Fork for 30 years. He was a deacon and teacher of the Young Adult Sunday School class; Mrs. Angel was always at his side very supportive in all church activities, especially in the music of the church. Other faithful servants include the Andersons, Angels, Brigmans, Carsons, Carters, Chandlers, Deweeses, Gardners, Gills, Metcalfs, Moxleys, Rays, and Robinsons.

Today there are two active members, and several inactive members, who were born around the turn of the 19th century. Mr. Oscar Anderson, age 100, has been a member for more than 67 years. He has always been a faithful servant of the church and is still very active in church affairs. Mrs. John Gardner, age 92, has been a member 60 years and still attends services. The church asserts itself with excessive pride in 41 active members and 31 inactive members.

God has wrought a great service to this church and there is evidence that His power is still at work.

Paint Gap Baptist Church



Our church is thought to have been organized around 1825-30. Paint Gap Church was first located down the road on Paint Fork. It was later built on the site where the church cemetery is now located. The building was used as a school as well as the church.

Around 1912 the people built the church on the present site. The building was of wood with one room and a vestibule with two small rooms off set.

In 1960 under the pastor, Rev. Guy West, the church was raised and Sunday School rooms built in the basement. We put in a furnace. We had added new carpet and new pews, and bricked the outside. We did this all and it was debt free.

The cemetery across the road was made at the same time, the property was given by Mr. Herbert Brown.

In the middle 70's we made a paved parking lot and driveway. We also made a picnic shelter at the back.

In 1954 the church made up a budget and we still work on a budget. We help to sponsor two missionaries, and give to different things.

We have been fortunate to have had some of the best preachers and pastors that have ever been.

In the early years of our church, we only had preaching once a month, a Saturday evening service and on Sunday morning. They used to have revival services in the morning, the people would leave their fields of work and go to the services.

Later the church had service every other Sunday morning and Sunday night. A pastor may have had two or three churches.

Churches have changed along with the times.

❖ Payne's Chapel Baptist Church ❖



The Presbytery met January 23, 1887 to organize Payne's Chapel Church. Rev. D.A. Payne presented the first ten members, who were; Chief Payne, Thomas Massey, Jacob Jarrett, Sinthey Brown, Frances Massey, Hariett Buckner, Emily Jane Buckner, Malinda Farmer, Barbara Farmer and Maryon Jarrett. Chief Payne and G.W. Buckner were the first deacons.

Chief Payne donated 1/2 acre of land and timber for building and William Payne chopped the lead in the first tree cut. The building actually started in 1904 and was completed in 1905. The deed was registered October 2, 1905. Frank Payne and son Frank Jr. later gave property for the adjoining cemetery. The first grave being that of Gaither Payne, who died February 20, 1905.

I talked with a member in her 80's and a former

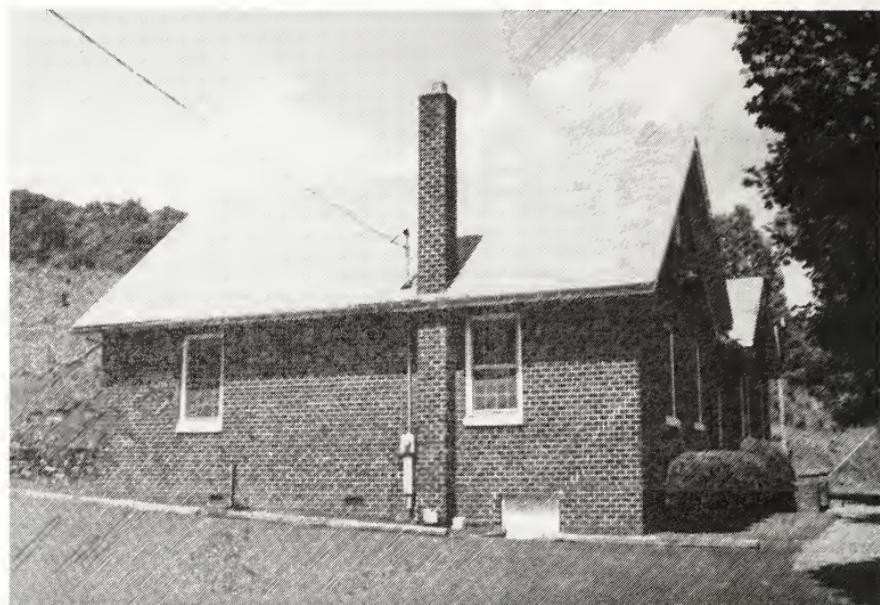
member, who is 92. Their memories take them back to many of the early ministers and revivals. The huge crowds, who came by horseback, wagons or buggies from Bailey's Branch and the Marshall area, have vivid recollections of the hitching posts for the horses, big baptizings, etc.

In May 1953, we added an entire new pulpit area. During the 60's, we rented a tobacco field and the proceeds allowed us to add three classrooms. A sliding louvered door afforded some much needed space in the auditorium, utilizing the middle classroom.

In 1974 we refurnished with a new paint job, carpet, upholstered pews and a new piano.

We are blessed to be a close knit group, though small in number, who work well together. Recently, our improvements amounted to a covered picnic area, new thermal windows, insulation and white vinyl siding over all and face rock on the chimney and foundation blocks.

❖ Peeks Chapel Baptist Church ❖



Bull Creek Baptist Church, just across the hill from East Fork, was the mother church of East Fork Baptist church. On July 14, 1855, a group of devout Christians met under a large oak tree (still standing) where Bee Tree Road intersected East Fork, for the purpose of organizing a church for this community. The church was established in the midst of a ledge of mountains with a membership few in number, but strong in character. Among the first members were John and Roxy Ramsey, John and Elizabeth Smith, Absalom and Mary Hooker, and Anna Peek. John and Sally Ammons and Isabel Buckner were soon added by baptism. No church was ever started with better prospects as far as character of its members were concerned; they were both soldiers of the cross and ready for God's word and work.

John Ramsey, operating a horse powered saw mill on the headwaters of East Fork creek, donated the lumber for the construction of the church building. Anna Peek gave the land. The building was erected on the bank of the creek about one-fourth mile above the oak tree where it was organized.

John Ramsey was elected as one of the first deacons. John Ammons was ordained to preach by the church in 1856. He became one of the great preachers in the mountains. He was very instrumental in establishing Mars Hill College. He served as president for a short time following the Civil War.

Much of the church business in the early years was confined to making sure its members kept the resolutions upon which the church was founded.

As the congregation grew, there was a need for a larger building. In 1899, a new church was erected on property donated by Lynn and Emiline Peek that was adjacent to the first building. The name of the church was changed to Peeks Chapel. Many great men have pastored the church including Jack Sprinkle, Decatur Ponder and Grady Shepherd.

Music has always been a vital part of each worship service. In the beginning people sang without the benefit of an organ or piano. Rev. McKinley and Lizzie Franklin donated the first pump organ. There were many good singing leaders over the years. Some of these were Joe Robinson, Jess Woody, Wayne Clark, Raleigh Robinson, Cornelius Ponder, Kerffman Clark, George Bruce and others. In the summertime a singing school

was held. Cornelius Ponder was one of the most remembered singing school teachers.

After World War II, the people saw a need for a bigger and better church building. With only five hundred dollars in the building fund, a new church building was let for bids. Stanley Marshbanks was the contractor. The old building was sold before the new building was completed and church services were held in a garage building just down the road. The church congregation held its first service in the building May 2, 1949. Oh, what a great accomplishment this! A revival was held that year with Grady Shepherd (pastor) and Leslie Edwards as the preachers. Fifty-seven were baptized in the creek just above Bone Camp Road.

Since that first year many improvements have been made to the church structure. A furnace took the place of the pot-bellied stove. Modern pews replaced the wooden benches from the old church. Sunday School rooms, along with restrooms, have been added. A fellowship hall has been completed, adjacent to the church sanctuary. Today the church buildings and its furnishings are insured for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Lasting impressions have been left by many steadfast leaders. Some of these are as follows: Jessie Woody (was many times the only one at Sunday School), Harrison Bruce (deacon and Treasurer-Peeks Chapel Church has never been in debt), Joe Denton (sawed oak logs into boards and saw to it that the new pews were built to last many years), Birdie Mace (deacon who brought the kindling to start the fire in the pot-bellied stove, he was one of the most steadfast people in the church),

James Ramsey (deacon, it was his job to go get the preacher on Sunday and take him back home because he was the only one that had a car), John Cargile (deacon, his son Glenn was a deacon and Sunday School superintendent), Woodrow Dill (church clerk), and Ella Peek (treasurer) - these are only a few that can be well remembered. With the steadfastness of these and many more, the church has always climbed to the mountaintop after being in the valley so low.

The influence of Peeks Chapel has been extended through the ordination of several men, Arthur Hensley, Dearl Ammons, Stanley Peek, and Myrom Roberts. Billy Murray, the current pastor, has been at the church since 1980. Bobby Hernandez is chairman of the Deacon Board and Larry Huffman is Sunday School superintendent.

❀ Piney Grove Baptist Church ❀



Piney Grove was organized November 26, 1871, under the name of Holly Bush Baptist Church.

The organization was formed in an old dwelling house, the property of Edward Teague. The Charter Members of the church were A.P. Worley, deacon; J.F. Teague, clerk; Warren Sams, A.J. Wilson, Flora Wilson, Liddie Ledford and Ona Sams.

The articles of Faith and Covenant of the Missionary Baptist Church were adapted and the first pastor was elected which was Rev. Harrison Davis. The fourth Saturday and Sunday of each month were selected for regular meeting days.

In later years the first church house was built and the name was changed to Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church. This church was built of hewn logs, a one room building about 18 by 20 feet

in size. Two small windows with shutters, one in the side, one in the back with no glass in the windows. It had a large fireplace in one end. There was no pulpit. The pastor would stand near the fireplace by a small table. The seats were made of chestnut logs split in the center flat sides up with no backs, round sides down with wooden legs whittled by hand.

The door was made of heavy hewn plank with hand made hinges. Wooden pegs were used to secure the hinges since there were no nails. The church was used as a school house also.

The second building was erected in the year 1887 with the enrollment of twenty nine members, two deacons, and the pastor, the Rev. J.P. Painter. The sills for this church were hewn by the men of the community. It was framed, weather boarded, a roof with hand made boards, and then floored. It was several years before it was ceiled and windows faced and glass was put in. The seats and all the finishing work was done by Belt Buckner with the help of Will Buckner.

The material used in this building was hauled to Henry Worley's at the mouth of Little Pine Creek and sawed. All this work was done by men of the community. The shingles for this building were hand made of poplar and chestnut wood, shaved or dressed with a drawing knife. The ceiling was hand dressed with a plane.

The bell was placed in the church about the year 1906. This building was also used as a school house.

Feeling the need for a new church building with class rooms the members voted to start a building

fund on the 2nd Sunday, April 12, 1953. In July 1953 the present church building was started. Having moved the seats from the old building into the new, the first service was held in the new building on Homecoming Day, June 5, 1955. A short service was held in the old building - the members then marched from the old building as Mr. & Mrs. Tom Worley sang. "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand". The oldest members followed the pastor, Rev. Dan Windsor and Rev. Wiley Graham, as the congregation entered the building the pianist, Mrs. Wilma Ramsey played "Onward Christian Soldiers". Rev. Wiley Graham gave the welcome address and the Rev. Dan Windsor preached the 11 o'clock sermon.

This church house was dedicated on Homecoming Day, June 5, 1960.

The present membership is 153.

❖ Piney Mountain Baptist Church ❖



Piney Mountain Baptist Church grew out of a Community Sunday School which met in F.M. Stockton's vacant store. A prayer meeting grew out of the Sunday School. This prayer meeting was led by O.T. Bell. By general consent, the group decided to organize into a church. Plans were made and on March 27, 1902 a New Missionary Baptist Church was organized.

The original building was one long room used as a sanctuary. The members at first had individual chairs, but later, memorial pews were bought. The church was given its name, Piney Mountain, by Colonel W.L. Lowery, because of the beautiful pine trees around the place.

In 1903 Piney Mountain joined the French Broad Baptist Association, and each year following delegates have been sent to represent the congregation at the annual meeting.

As time passed, Piney Mountain began to grow. As a result of this growth several church-oriented programs were expanded.

Sunday School was always divided into departments and met each Sunday even when the regular worship services did not meet. In the last few years a Nursery and Young Adult departments have been organized.

In 1916 the church added BYPU. This group met on Sunday evenings and its program was designed to train church leaders. Along with growth and expansion in education came greater involvement in Missions, Home, State and Foreign. One of the ways the church supported missions was through the organization of a Woman's Missionary Union. Beginning about the year 1903, this was one of the very first WMU's to be organized in the association.

GA's, Acteens and Missions Friends were established later. They were to be stepping-stones to the WMU. R.A's were organized in 1958. All these organizations have grown tremendously throughout the years.

In 1903 the church established a church cemetery on land given by Mr. M.N. Bradley.

In the 1930's The Lords Acre Program was begun at the church.

The one time when attendance at the regular services fell sharply was during 1942-1944. This was due in part to the polio epidemic when children were not allowed in public gatherings.

In 1975 the church called their first full time pastor. Rev. Sibbald Lambert was called and was the first minister to be ordained by the church.

Under his leadership, the church took an active role in the work of the French Broad Association.

Rev. Lambert also helped greatly in the adoption of new programs, children's church, bus ministry and the tape ministry.

In November 1980 the people of Piney Mountain decided to build a new building. Ground breaking was on July 5, 1981 and the first Sunday service in the new building was April 11, 1982.

From the very beginning, Piney Mountain has proved to be a progressive church in all ways. Even through hard times the church has stood firm in its commitment to God. The members have moved with the times, making progressive adjustments as they deemed necessary. They have adopted new programs of education, missions, and church finances.

❖ Redmon Baptist Church ❖



Redmon Baptist Church was built in 1940 on land donated by George C., Laura, Cora, and Addie Redmon.

James Monroe Redmon (1879-1951) donated timber and supplies. Many members of the community donated supplies and labor.

The church was built at a cost of \$2,546.00. The bell was bought from the Board of Education for \$5.00.

Redmon is a Missionary Baptist Church and has been a member of the Newfound Association since 1946. The church has 74 members.

The Ladies Class compiled a cookbook of local recipes in 1987.

Anice shelter for the use by the church was built in the 1980's. On the second Sunday in July, reunion is open to all with dinner on the grounds and music.

Robert Vaughn was the first pastor and William Lance is the current pastor.

Redmon joined the French Broad Association in January, 1994.

❖ **Trinity Baptist Church** ❖



On Sunday afternoon, February 3, 1957, approximately 65 members and the pastor of Old Bull Creek Baptist Church met together to discuss plans for the organization of a new church which would be able to cooperate more fully with the Southern Baptist Convention. The decision was made to begin having regular services in the former store building owned by C.T. Waldrup on Highway 213 between Mars Hill and Marshall. On Sunday, February 17, 1957, the church group was called into session for the purpose of appointing committees and to begin making plans for the church. At

the Pastor's Conference in Mars Hill on Tuesday, February 19, 1957, the resolution to organize the church was formulated and adopted by the Council composed of the following members: Paul A. Tugman, Rev. Ralph L. Hogan, C.H. Green, Ralph Holcombe, King Thomas, S.P. Edmonds, H.G. Barnes, Robert E. Seymour, and David B. Roberts-representing the following Baptist churches: Calvary, Madison Seminary, Forks of Ivy, Mars Hill and Bull Creek.

On Sunday, February 24, 1957, the Rev. James Buchanan invited pastors and deacons from surrounding churches to meet with him and his people to serve as a council to help in the organization of a new church. The Rev. David Roberts was selected as moderator for the council and Rev. Ralph Hogan as clerk. The meeting was called to order with the singing of "We're Marching to Zion" followed by devotion by Rev. Howard Barnes. Council was approved by vote from those present. After Rev. James Buchanan made the statement of purpose for the organization of a Missionary Baptist Church, the "Articles of Faith" and "The Church Covenant" were presented by Dr. Robert Seymour. Upon approval of these two items, 47 people presented themselves for membership in the newly organized church. Motion was made by Rev. James Buchanan for the church to be named Trinity Baptist Church. This motion was seconded and carried with a unanimous vote. The floor was opened for nominations for Pastor of the newly organized church with Rev. James Buchanan elected as pastor. C.T. Waldrup was elected to

serve as deacon and as church clerk. The Rev. C.H. Greene brought the Charge to the Church.

At a business meeting on Wednesday, March 6, 1957 The Constitution and By-Laws as set by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina were read and discussed relative to adoption by Trinity Baptist Church. A committee was appointed to study By-Laws and report back to the church group. On Sunday, March 24, 1957, Rev. Buchanan resigned as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, and on this same date, the first baptismal service was held at the Flat Creek Baptist Church for the following people: Thomas Hunter, Stanley Hunter, Garland Hunter, Lora Hunter, and Brenda Thomas. On Sunday, April 1, 1957, Rev. Wesley B. Sprinkle began duties as supply pastor. On Wednesday, September 4, 1957, Dr. D.E. Richardson was elected as full-time pastor for an indefinite period of time. At a special called business meeting on Sunday evening, May 25, 1958, Trinity Baptist church members approved the purchase of the lot on which the current church stands; construction began on Friday, February 27, 1959, and services were held in the new church building before the end of 1960.

❖ Union Valley Baptist Church ❖



A one-room log building served as a school and church in the 1800's. The community felt that a larger building was needed for the growing congregation. In 1908, a deed shows that Andy Franklin sold a fourth of an acre, more or less, to the community of Revere for \$10 on which to build a church.

Murphy Rice and James McDevitt hauled the lumber to build the church. It was donated by various members in the community. Joe Rice and Alfred McDevitt hauled a bell to the weatherboarded church. Union Valley Missionary Baptist Church was established in 1909.

The years passed, and finally, the wooden building was sold and moved off the premises in preparation for a new, warmer building to be constructed out of block. Carrie Rice Wallin and Wanda Rice

went to Marshall where they spent the day walking up and down the street asking for donations. With other donations and a lot of hard work, the dream finally became a reality. The building, with its blue paned push-out windows and a bell that could be heard throughout the community beckoning all to come, has served the people well. Several years ago, the church was remodeled. The outdated windows were replaced with transparent ones that raise. Paneling, a textured ceiling, lowered lighting, an inner entrance to the basement, padded pews, a covered entry way, and brick on the outside have changed the appearance of what many remember it to be. Many people have come and gone through its sacred doors and have different memories to share; all of which help to make the history of Union Valley complete.

❖ **Upper Laurel Baptist Church** ❖



Sometime during the year 1851, the Baptist people of the Upper Laurel community called a presbytery to constitute a church. They met in a small log house near Faust post office and the church they organized was called "Upper Laurel" because it was farther up on Laurel Creek than any other Baptist church at that time. The earliest intact records still available are dated 1853. The church recorded Articles of Faith, of which there were ten. The church has six of the original articles, four have been lost.

During the early years, the church was often involved in church discipline. All through the records, you find where a charge was brought against Brother or Sister so and so for lewdness, profanity, gossiping, fighting with a neighbor, drunkenness, making spirits or for failing to attend

services. The church took the Christian walk very seriously.

As early as 1854, the church elected and sent delegates to the associational meetings, which we continue to do to this day. The French Broad Association met at Upper Laurel for the first time in 1903. In 1856, there was a note in the records of no meetings being held due to "the small pox being in the country". During the Civil War years and thereafter, there are no written records. This covers from November, 20, 1867, until January 25, 1890. But during this time, as recorded in a summary written by church clerk Joseph Willis, a group of members living on California Creek met and agreed to petition the church for a joint letter of dismissal in order to form a church that would be more convenient to them. The petition was granted and in July 1869, the California Creek Church was formed by authority of the mother church, Upper Laurel.

The people of Upper Laurel continued to meet in the log house until it became inadequate as a place of worship. The people worked together and got out the logs and had the lumber sawed. On Christmas day, 1888, they met to raise the walls of the new building, on what is now Laurel Valley road. This building served as a place of worship.

In 1897, there was a group that came into the community, known as the Cambelites or Disciples. It is not stated what this group believed, but that some members were drawn away but later returned to the church fellowship.

Around 1899 the church clerk began recording offerings for the other needs, such as \$1.00 to buy

a pair of shoes for a needy member and \$.50 for the pastor. Although Sunday School was not mentioned very often in the records, it is evident that there have been classes for at least 80 years.

On May 20, 1906 J.D. King was elected pastor and served until June 1922. He was reelected after two years and served as pastor for 27 years. Then Willie Ray was elected. During his first revival there were 45 converts. Also, during his ministry, the church began to talk seriously of a new church. Members met at Shook graveyard to discuss that a building be erected on this present site. The church moved into the new building on July 14, 1940. In 1942, the church was having weekly prayer meetings with two services each week.

In the 1950's insurance on the church property was purchased. In the early 1960's bathrooms were installed in the church and classrooms were added. Adding these classrooms was no small undertaking, considering that underneath the church, there was no basement. Dirt had to be removed by hand, rocks had to be blasted, but with hard work and the Lord's help, six classrooms were built.

In 1964, a new piano, pews and pulpit were purchased. This piano replaced the one donated to the church in 1943 in memory of J.F. Buckner, which was the first musical instrument owned by the church. The parking lot was paved in 1964. Formation of the new cemetery was in the 1960's.

In the 1960's and during the 1970's, the church changed parts of its business structure, in hopes of providing more continuity in the ministry of the church and to carry on the work of the church more

effectively. Discipleship Training was begun in the early 1970's.

In 1974, the church purchased land on Bear Branch road to place a mobile home for use as a parsonage. In 1983, the church voted to build a fellowship hall which would contain a limited recreation area.

As the condition of the church was deteriorating and as the need for more Sunday School classes increased, the church voted in November 1991 to build a new church building. Plans were made to reserve wormy Chestnut lumber, oak flooring and other items to be used in the new building. But this opportunity was taken when the church burned on November 29, 1991. But with a great spirit of determination and cooperation the people moved forward. Under the leadership of Rev. Cline Hensley, Jr., the new building was completed and the first service in the new church was held on July 5, 1992.

Hopefully, as we move into future years, we will remember those who have gone before and know it takes every member to be the body of the church to carry out our Lord's work. Let us be faithful to the task set before us and let us be a people with a will to work, knowing all wisdom and strength comes from Christ.

Again, on March 1, 1994, tragedy struck Upper Laurel Baptist Church. Another fire destroyed the beautiful building just dedicated in 1992. We were saddened by our loss, but the love of the Lord prevailed and a new building was started in April 1994.

With the continuing blessings from God, and help from many churches and Christian people we hope to be worshipping in the new building by August 1994.

❖ Upper Rice Creek Baptist Church ❖



It is believed the Upper Rice Creek Baptist Church was organized sometime between 1889-1896. The county and community worked together to organize a church in the Upper Rice Creek Community. The first church records date back to 1904.

The first church building was located near the present-day Rice Creek Cemetery. It served as a school as well as a church.

In 1941 a new building was built approximately 1/4 mile from the original building. On August 26, 1940, H.Y. Briggs sawed lumber for the building. The building was completed and the first service held on November 19, 1941. In December of 1941, five members contributed money to finish paying for the church.

Through the years the building has been improved. Vinyl siding has been added, two class-

rooms for children have been added. Stained glass has replaced the once clear glass windows and carpet has been added to the once hardwood floors.

Sunday School has been an important part of church growth through the years. Discipleship Training was started in 1984 under the leadership of Rev. Keith Stephenson. Mission offerings are sent regularly to various missions.

For almost 100 years Upper Rice Creek has faithfully served the Lord in their community. May the Lord bless in all our efforts to serve Him continually.

❖ Walnut Baptist Church ❖



Walnut Missionary Baptist Church was organized in the home of Mr. and Mrs. F.M. McDevitt in Walnut in 1906. In addition to the McDevitts, other charter members were George Ramsey, the Rev.

Gabriel Rice, Mr. and Mrs. C.F. Johnson, George McDevitt and Mrs. Lizzie Ramsey.

Services were held in the McDevitt home for about one year. As the membership grew the Walnut Free Will Church allowed the group to hold services in their church. In 1907, a lot was purchased just a few yards from where the present church stands and construction began on a new church in 1908 and completed that year. Only church services were held there for several years.

In 1920, Mrs. Sankey Brigman, Mrs. Lizzie Ramsey and Mrs. Moody Brigman and their families began having Sunday School in the church. By 1933, the church had grown in membership to about 200, and seven classrooms were added to the building.

As time went on, the need for a more modern church building was felt and the adjoining lot was purchased in August, 1951. At Thanksgiving time that year the foundation of the present building was laid.

On August 8, 1952, Sunday School was held in the old church for the last time and the congregation, led by the pastor, entered the new building carrying both national and Christian flags and singing, "Onward, Christian Soldiers", and held the first church services. The church has a dignified chapel room with a baptistry in the back of the pulpit. There are classrooms on each side of the baptistry. On the lower level there are six classrooms and two bathrooms.

In 1987, the Homer Ferguson's of Jacksonville, Florida, summer attendants of the church, donated \$10,000 toward the building of a fellowship

hall. After many months of fund raising, planning and construction, the hall was added on the west side of the building in late 1989. It includes tables and chairs for around 100 people, a fully equipped kitchen, and two more bathrooms. The Rev. Bobby Smith was pastor during this time and guided the congregation with diplomacy and dedicated, prayerful leadership. Young Stephen McDevitt showed outstanding leadership in drawing plans, getting estimates, securing labor, and incidentals. Rock Fleming was a great help with electrical and air conditioning.

There is no record as to when the church joined the French Broad Association, but older members suggest it was around 1925 or earlier. There is no record of who was the first pastor, but it was probably the Rev. Gabriel Rice, since he was a charter member.

Women leaders have been the backbone of the church over the years. The list includes the founders of the Sunday School; Mrs. Agnes Brigman Ruth, teacher, secretary, and first director of BYPU; Mrs. Grace Wilds Buckner, teacher and WMU leader; Mrs. Sallie Hunter Brigman, church clerk and treasurer; Mrs. Lucile Brigman Burnette, teacher, Bible school principal, study course leader, social leader; Mrs. Marie Hutchins Roberts, teacher, pianist, organist; Mrs. Geraldine Roberts McDevitt, teacher, pianist organist; Mrs. Freida Snyder Landers, Mrs. Emma Kate Rice McDevitt, Mrs. Betty Jo Goldsmith Treadway, teachers; Mrs. Juanita Goldsmith Treadway, secretary, teacher; Mrs. Louise McDevitt Hart, teacher, pianist; Mrs. Helen Leake Adams, teacher and church trea-

surer; Mrs. Marie Moore Fender, teacher and leader of the youth group; and Mrs. Dorothy Brigman Shupe, teacher, secretary, Bible school principal, and church clerk for the past 27 years.

Other younger women are proving their worth in a supportive effort to what has been the foundation of the Walnut Baptist Church.

Ѡ Walnut Creek Baptist Church ዘ



Walnut Creek Baptist Church was officially organized in 1860; however, church meetings were held prior to its organization. According to Associational records, the Annual Meeting for 1844 was conducted at Walnut Creek Church. There are no other records of the Association meeting with Walnut Creek until 1953, and again in 1964.

The first church building was constructed of logs and was located on the Chris Runnion place,

Indian Grave Gap Road. It was probably erected during the early 1840's. About 1890, the log church was torn down and a new one built on the Lewis Runnion property, Walnut Creek Road. The present building was erected in 1960.

Walnut Creek Church building is a beautiful brick building located in the Walnut Creek Valley. As one beholds the beautiful setting and majestic hills surrounding the church, it's a marvelous place to worship God.

Through the witnessing of the people of Walnut Creek, the church has been an influence to all who have passed by and to all who have made Walnut Creek their home.

Ѡ Zion Baptist Church ዓ



According to Church records, Zion Baptist Church was organized on a Saturday in August,

1869. At this meeting seven became members. In the September meeting fourteen became members. In 1993 records show 78 resident members and 99 non-resident members. The first two deacons to be ordained were William Waldrop and S.M. Seagle.

There have been four different locations of Zion Church since its formation in 1869. All four locations have been in the Bluff community.

According to Church records, discussion on building a new Church began in 1889. The new building was started in 1903 with a collection of \$4.15. Since this time classrooms and restrooms have been added. The inside has been remodeled and vinyl siding has been put on the outside.

In July, 1993 a fellowship hall was started. With the blessings from God and the hard work from men in the Church and community and all the donations this is near completion.

Due to Bible School each summer and the Christmas Play each year there has been an increase in young people coming to church.

CONSTITUTION 1920

ARTICLE 1

This Association shall be known as the French Broad Baptist Association and shall meet annually on Thursday before the fourth Sunday in August at such places as it in session may designate.

ARTICLE 2

It shall be composed of delegates selected and sent from churches that are orthodox in New Testament Doctrines.

ARTICLE 3

The object of this Association shall be the promulgation and advancement of all lines of religious work, which includes Missions, Orphanage,

Temperance, Sunday School, Christian Education, Woman's Mission Work, etc.

ARTICLE 4

The Association shall be only an advisory body and shall have no power to interfere in the internal affairs of any church composing it, but the Association may refuse to receive the delegates of any church, the faith and practice of which is not in accordance with that of the Missionary Baptist Church, and the Association may withdraw fellowship from such a church until it reforms its action, both in faith and practice.

ARTICLE 5

Each church shall be entitled to three delegates and one additional delegate for every twenty-five member in excess of fifty members or fractional part of twenty-five, provided that all ordained ministers in active work, the officers of the Association, the executive committee, and chairmen of committees to write reports for next year be delegates *ex officio*.

ARTICLE 6

The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk, and Historian, who shall be elected annually by ballot or otherwise as the Association may decide. Each of these officers must be a member of some church which is a member of this Association.

ARTICLE 7

The Moderator shall preside over the deliberations of the Association, appoint committees, and discharge any and all other duties incident to parliamentary assemblage. The Clerk shall keep a true record of the proceedings of the Association and shall read the minutes and call the roll of delegates as often as may be desired by the Association. The Historian shall make a correct record of such events as are of interest to the Association during the associational year and read the same at each session of the Association.

ARTICLE 8

An executive committee consisting of five members shall be appointed at each session of the Association, the duties of the executive committee shall be the supervision of the mission work in the bounds of the Association and the transaction of any incidental business that would deserve the attention of the Association if it were in session. The work of the executive committee shall be reported to the Association at its annual session. The executive committee shall be appointed by the Moderator on the recommendation of the committee on nominations. It shall elect a chairman and secretary, the secretary shall be treasurer of the Association.

ARTICLE 9

Each church shall report annually to the Association by letter the statistics called for on the blank furnished by Clerk of the Association each year. If any church fails for two consecutive years to report it shall be dropped from the list of churches.

ARTICLE 10

This constitution may be amended or changed at any time by a two-thirds vote. In all other proceedings a majority vote of the delegates present shall govern.

CONSTITUTION**I. NAME**

This body shall be known as the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association.

II. OBJECT

The object of this Association shall be to edify the churches within its bounds; to promote Missions, Christian Education, and such form of Social Service as the body may engage in; and to cooperate with the Baptist State Convention and Southern Baptist Convention in Kingdom advancement.

III. MEMBERSHIP

This body shall be composed of three messengers from each cooperating church and one additional messenger for every twenty-five members above fifty, provided, that no church shall have more than ten messengers, and provided further, that pastors of cooperating churches, members of the executive committee, and associational officers, and those appointed to read reports shall be ex officio members of the body.

IV. OFFICERS

The officers of this Association shall be; a Moderator, a Vice Moderator, and a Clerk, all to be elected by the body in the first session of the Association in its annual meeting. The Moderator to take position at close of the fourth session. The Moderator may not serve more than two years consecutively.

V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Moderator, who shall be chairman of the Committee, and Vice Moderator, the Clerk, the president of the Woman's Missionary Union, the B. T. U. Director, the Sunday School Superintendent, and in addition one Pastor and two Laymen to be appointed by the incumbent moderator, and not more than two of whom shall be from the same church. It shall be the duty of this committee to carry out the plans laid at the annual session of the

Association, as far as possible and in line with the general policies and practices of the Association.

Amendment I. The Field Worker shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

VI. ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Association shall be on Thursday and Friday following the first Sunday in August.

VII. AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended at any regular session of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the messengers present, provided the amendment is presented to the Association on the first day, and voted and passed on favorably upon the second day.

FRENCH BROAD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION OF THE REUNITED ASSOCIATION, 1850

ARTICLE 1st. That the Association be composed of delegates chosen and sent from each individual Church.

2d. That the delegates chosen and sent shall be recommended in a letter by the Church to which they belong and shall include the Ministry, and some of the most able members belonging to the Church.

3d. That the Association when met and formed shall at each meeting elect a Moderator and Clerk.

4th. That the rules of decorum be read immediately after the Association is formed.

5th. That the Association disclaims all human creeds or confessions of faith, drawn up by uninspired men, as bonds of union and communion, and declare that the Bible alone is its platform and the only rule by which it will be governed, yet is willing to exhibit to the world an abstract as an exponent of its doctrinal views for the removing of false aspersions which are unjustly thrown at us, and for the information of others not acquainted with our tenets, but for no other purposes.

6th. This Association will encourage a sound ministry, such as exhibit Christ a whole Saviour, having made salvation possible to every human being on the terms of the Gospel, which is freely offered unto all.

7th. That this Association will discountenance and repudiate the doctrine of particular, personal, unconditional and eternal election and reprobation.

8th. That any preacher in regular standing in any one of our Churches, though not a delegate may be invited to a seat, and his name enrolled in our Minutes.

9th. That this Association may appoint a Committee or Committees which may be thought necessary for the expedition of business, and every Committee appointed to attend to any particular branch of business shall report their proceedings in writing to the Association while in session, and all reports made by Committees after due examination may be received or rejected by the Association.

10th. That all queries regularly presented to the Association by any Church in the union shall be attended to, and all queries shall be considered regularly presented that are applications to the Association for counsel or advice to the Church presenting the same.

11th. That the Association shall have a book in which shall be recorded an accurate account of all its proceedings.

12th. That any Church may become a member of the Association by making application by letter and delegates, and adopting our articles of faith.

13th. That the Association may withdraw from any Church that becomes disorderly or refuses to be represented by letter and delegates.

14th. There shall be an Association fund kept for defraying expenses and charges that may accrue; and for keeping up said fund each Church may contribute at pleasure.

15th. That there be a Treasurer appointed by the Association, who shall hold his office during the pleasure of the Association, whose duty it shall be to take care of, and account for all the monies committed to his care.

16th. That the Association shall assume no higher authority than an advisory council.

RULES OF DECORUM.

1. The Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.
2. There shall be no conversing by the members one with another so as to interrupt business while in session.

3. Any member wishing to speak shall rise to his feet and address the Moderator.
4. Any member while speaking shall attend closely to the subject under consideration.
5. No member while speaking shall make remarks on others' manner of speaking.
6. No member shall be interrupted while speaking unless it be necessary to call him to order for transgressing of rules.
7. No member shall speak more than three times on the same subject, without leave of the Association.
8. No member shall absent himself while the Association is in session, unless leave be first obtained from the Moderator.
9. All motions made and seconded shall be considered ready for discussion, and may be discussed at length until the previous question is called for and in all cases where it may be necessary to take the vote of the Association a majority shall be an act.
10. Each member shall have full privilege to speak in his turn provided the rules are observed.
11. The Moderator shall have full privilege to speak, provided the chair is filled.
12. All resolutions offered, shall be committed to writing signed by the person introducing the same and handed to the Moderator.
13. There shall be no other title used in addressing each other while in session, but that of Brother.
14. Any member who breaks the foregoing rules, shall be admonished by the Moderator, and

if the Moderator fails to strictly enforce them he may be reminded of his duty by any member of the Association.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BIG IVY ASSOCIATION

1. We believe in one only true and living God; and notwithstanding there are three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—yet there is but one in substance, equal in power and glory, and can not be divided, either in principle or practice, and not liable to change.
2. We believe the Old and New Testaments is the Word of God, and a sufficiency is therein contained for our instruction, and they are the only rules of faith and practice.
3. We believe in the doctrine of Original sin, and that all mankind, since the fall, are by nature the children of Wrath, one as much as another.
4. We believe in man's impotency, or inability to recover himself out of the fallen state he is in, therefore a Saviour is absolutely needed.
5. We believe that sinners are Justified in the sight of God only by the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ.
6. We believe the Perseverance of the Saints in grace—that they are born again, or adopted into the family of Heaven—that they become equal heirs with Jesus Christ, and that He will raise them up at the last day.

7. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are gospel Ordinances and true believers the proper subjects, and we admit of no other knowingly.
8. We believe that the true mode of Baptism is to baptize or immerse a person, by their own consent, once in water, back foremost, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
9. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and of a General Judgment, where all will be judged according to the deeds done in the body
10. We believe the punishment of the wicked will be Everlasting and the joys of the righteous will be Eternal after death.
11. We believe washing one another's feet is a command of Christ left with His disciples, and ought to be practiced by His followers.
12. We believe that no one has a right to administer the Ordinances but such as are legally called and qualified there unto.
13. We believe it is the duty of all church members to attend their church meetings, and it is the duty of the church to deal with them for neglecting the same.
14. We believe it is the duty of all church members to contribute to the support of the gospel and defraying all reasonable expenses of the church, never neglecting the poor, according to their several abilities.
15. We believe that any doctrine that goes to encourage or indulge people in their sins, or cause them to settle down on anything

short of saving faith in Christ, for salvation, is erroneous, and all such doctrines will be rejected by us.

16. None of the above-named articles shall be so construed as to hold with Particular and Eternal Election and Reprobation, or so as to make God partial, either directly or indirectly, so as to injure any of the children of men.

CONSTITUTION 1956

ARTICLE I - NAME

Section I. The NAME of this body shall be the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

Section I. The PURPOSE of this body shall be:

1. TO COORDINATE and PROMOTE (a) Missions, (b) Christian Education, (c) and such forms of social service as the body may engage in.
2. TO COOPERATE with the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention in Kingdom advancement.
3. The Association shall advise and assist, but shall have no power whatsoever to infringe upon the rights of the churches. All churches constituting the Association remain sovereign and independent bodies and cooperate through the Association only that they may more effectively promote the cause of Christ.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**Section I. MEMBERSHIP:**

1. This Association shall be composed of the duly constituted Missionary Baptist churches in this general area who have been accepted as members and who shall be represented by:
 - a. The duly elected messengers of the member churches.
 - b. The active officials of the Association.
 - c. Those reporting on any phase of the work of the association, providing they are members of a member church.
2. A church may be added to the membership of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the Association on the first day, and a majority vote on the second day.
3. Any member church may withdraw from the Association at its pleasure.

Section II. MESSENGERS: Each church is entitled to three messengers and one additional messenger for every twenty-five members above fifty.

Section III. LIMIT IN NUMBER OF MESSENGERS: No church shall have more than ten messengers with the exception of the pastors and the associational officers, who automatically are messengers *ex officio*.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section I. The officers of this association shall be (1) a Moderator, (2) a Vice Moderator, (3) a Clerk, (4) a Treasurer, (5) the Field Worker, (6) The Sunday School Superintendent, (7) the Training Union Director, (8) the President of the Woman's Missionary Union, (9) the President of the Brotherhood, and (10) the Secretary of Church Music.

Section II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Those officers, with the exception of the Field Worker, shall be elected as follows:

1. The Moderator shall appoint a nominating committee which shall present a slate of officers which, together with any nominations that are made from the floor, shall be voted upon during the first session of the Association in its Annual Meeting. Election is by two-thirds majority vote.
2. The Field Worker shall be recommended by the Executive Committee and shall be elected by a majority vote of the Association for an indefinite period.
3. The Associational Sunday School, Training Union, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood shall select presidents or directors for their respective organizations and recommend these persons to the nominating committee to be presented with the proposed slate of officers for election.

Section III. THE TENURE OF OFFICE: The terms of office shall be as follows:

1. The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer are to take office at the close of the last session of the annual Association meeting.
2. The work of the acting Clerk is not completed, however, until the work of the current session of the Association is completed and the minutes printed and distributed.
3. The Moderator may not serve more than four year consecutively.

ARTICLE V - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section I. The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE shall consist of the Moderator, who shall be chairman of the committee, the Vice Moderator, the Clerk, the Treasurer, the Sunday School Superintendent, the Training Union Director, the President of the Woman's Missionary Union, the Brotherhood President, the Secretary of Church Music, the Field Worker, and in addition, one Pastor and two lay members to be appointed by the new Moderator.

1. The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer shall be from different churches.
2. The Pastor and two lay members shall be from three churches not already represented on the committee.

Section II. The DUTY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to carry out the plans laid at the annual session of the Association, as far as possible, and

in line with the general policies and practices of the association.

Section III. The Executive Committee may appoint other committees such as may be needed for the advancement of associational work.

ARTICLE VI - PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Section I. The PROMOTION COMMITTEE is composed of the Associational officers and additional members to be appointed by the Committee on Reports.

1. These additional members include the historian and the reporters for Hospital, Orphanage, Relief and Annuity, Temperance and Civic Righteousness, Cooperative Program, Christian Education and Baptist Schools, American Bible Society, Homes for Aging, Evangelism, Stewardship, Baptist Periodicals.
2. The Vacation Bible School Superintendent is also a reporting member but is appointed by the Associational Sunday School Superintendent, with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section II. RESPONSIBILITIES of the Promotion Committee:

1. Each reporter should serve throughout the year to acquaint the churches with and to promote the organization or phase of work he represents.

2. At the Annual Meeting of the Association each reporter shall read a prepared report of not over three hundred words concerning the phase of work which he represents.

ARTICLE VII - STEERING COMMITTEE

Section I. The STEERING COMMITTEE shall be composed of the pastor and two lay members from each church, the lay members to be elected by the church which he represents.

Section II. RESPONSIBILITIES of the Steering Committee: The responsibilities of the Steering Committee shall be two-fold:

1. To meet from time to time with members of the Executive and Promotion Committees to consider the Kingdom work in the association.
2. To assist in acquainting the churches with different phases of the work.

ARTICLE VIII - OTHER COMMITTEES

Section I. The following STANDING COMMITTEES of the Association shall be appointed by the Moderator:

1. Nominating Committee
2. Committee on Reports
3. Program Committee
4. Committee on Places and Preachers
5. Constitutional Amendment Committee
6. Committee on Resolutions

Section II. No person shall serve on the same committee of the above group for more than two consecutive years.

ARTICLE IX - ANNUAL MEETINGS

Section I. The ANNUAL MEETING of the Association shall be on Thursday and Friday following the first Sunday in August.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENT

Section I. This constitution may be amended at any regular session of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the Association on the first day, and a majority vote on the second day.

French Broad Baptist Association Constitution 1987

ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this body shall be the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association.

ARTICLE II - Purpose

The purpose of this body shall be:

1. To coordinate and promote fellowship and growth, missions, Christian education, and involvement in such service projects as the Association sponsors.
2. To cooperate with the Baptist State Conven-

tion and the Southern Baptist Convention in Kingdom advancement.

3. The churches that constitute the Association remain sovereign and independent bodies that voluntarily cooperate through the Association to promote the cause of Christ more effectively. The Association may advise and assist the churches in their work in ways and by means that are mutually agreeable between the churches and the Association.

ARTICLE III - Membership

SECTION I. Member Churches

1. This Association shall be composed of duly constituted Missionary Baptist Churches in general area which have been formally accepted as members and which continue in fellowship by cooperating in the purpose and work of the Association, by naming messengers to the Annual Meetings, and by reporting to such Annual Meetings on forms which are provided by the Association.
2. A church seeking admission to membership in the Association may make application in the following manner:
 - a. Decision to seek such admission shall have been determined by vote of church and shall accompany the application.
 - b. Copies of the Confession of Faith and the Covenant adopted by the church shall accompany the application.

- c. Completed application shall be submitted to the Committee on Reception of New Members previous to the opening of an Annual Meeting of the Association.
3. The Committee on Reception of New Members shall report its findings to the Association on the first day of the annual session following its examination of any application. Upon favorable action on each application by a two-thirds majority of messengers present and voting on the second day, each church thus accepted will be enrolled as a member of the Association, and the Moderator will extend the hand of fellowship to the messengers present.
4. Should a member church decide to withdraw from the Association to join another association or to remain unattached, it should proceed in the following manner:
 - a. Decision to withdraw shall have been determined in formal business session.
 - b. A certified copy of the minutes of the formal business session shall be submitted to the Moderator of the Association and Chairman of the Executive Committee.
 - c. The Moderator shall appoint a committee to confer with the church as to reason and/or communicate any grievances the church has toward the Association.
 - d. The committee shall report its findings to the Association in annual session and upon favorable vote of two-thirds of the messengers present and voting on the

second day, the church shall be dismissed.

5. The Association in annual session, by a two-thirds majority of messengers present and voting, may withdraw fellowship from a member church upon investigation and recommendation of the Executive Committee, when such church is adjudged to have ceased promoting the objectives of the Association, or when the church has failed to send its annual letter to the Association for two consecutive years. However, before the Association formally severs its relationship with a member church, it shall make a strong effort to work out problems and retain the church in fellowship. If a church does not report to the Association in a given year, the Association shall take the initiative to assist the church in meeting reasonable requirements for continuing fellowship with the Association.

SECTION II. Membership of the Annual Meetings of the Association.

1. The membership of the Annual Meeting of the Association shall be composed of: The elected officers of the Association, all pastors who are members of churches in the Association, and all persons reporting on any phase of the work of the Association, shall be ex officio members of the Annual Meeting.
2. Each member church is entitled to three messengers, and one additional messenger

for every twenty-five members above fifty, except that no church shall have more than ten messengers exclusive of the ex officio members designated above.

3. The ex officio members in attendance and the elected messengers presenting certification of their election by their churches shall constitute the official voting enrollment in any session.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

SECTION I. The Officers of the Association shall be: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Trustees, Historian, Sunday School Director, Church Training Director, Brotherhood Director, Woman's Missionary Union Director, Music Director, Chairman of Evangelism, Chairman of Missions, Chairman of Stewardship and Vacation Bible School Director.

SECTION II. Election of Officers.

1. Officers shall be elected at the first session of the Associational Annual Meeting upon presentation of nominations by the Nominating Committee; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
2. The Associational Sunday School, Church Training, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood shall select directors for their respective organizations, and recommend these persons to the Nominating Committee to be presented with the other nominees proposed for election.

SECTION III. Terms of office shall be as follows:

1. All elected officers shall take office at the close of the last session of the Annual Associational Meeting.
2. The duties of the Clerk serving during the current session are not ended, however, until the work of the session is completed and the minutes printed and distributed.
3. The Moderator may serve no more than two years consecutively.
4. All committee members appointed and elected in the Annual Session begin their work at the close of the Annual Meeting and continue through the next Annual Session of the Association.

ARTICLE V - Executive Committee

SECTION I. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers named in Article IV, Section I, Committee Chairpersons, pastor and two elected lay-persons from each church. The Moderator shall serve as Chairman.

SECTION II. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer shall be from different churches at time of election.

SECTION III. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:

1. To act in behalf of the Association between Annual Meetings of the Association.
2. To carry out the plans laid at the Annual Session of the Association, as far as pos-

sible, and in line with the general policies and practices of the Associational work.

3. Executive Committee members should serve as connecting links between the Association and the churches. Church needs/programs should be brought to the attention of the Association; Associational needs/programs should also be reported to the churches.
4. The Executive Committee will meet on the first Saturday of November, February, and May, 10:00 a.m. at the Baptist Center.

ARTICLE VI - Associational Council

SECTION I. The Associational Council shall be composed of the officers named in Article IV, Section I. The Vice-Moderator will serve as Chairman of this council.

SECTION II. Purpose of the Associational Council:

The Council is to be the main coordinating and advisory group for the Association.

SECTION III. Duties of the Council:

1. Serve as a liaison between Associational officers, organizations and committees.
2. Determine needs of churches and Association and recommend ways to meet these needs.
3. Study and propose short-range and long-range goals for the Association.
4. Prepare Annual Associational Calendar.
5. Report quarterly to the Associational Executive Committee and annually to the Association.

ARTICLE VII - Missions Committee

SECTION I. The Missions Committee shall be composed of a director and eleven additional members recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Association in Annual Meeting. All mission work sponsored by the Association shall be under the supervision and direction of the Missions Committee.

SECTION II. Duties of the Missions Committee:

1. This committee shall, when a vacancy occurs in the office of Director of Missions, recommend a successor based upon the approved job description, to the Annual Meeting or to the Executive Committee. Election shall be by a majority vote and for an indefinite period of time.
2. It shall work in cooperation with the Director of Missions of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.
3. It shall supervise the activities of, and work with, the Director of Missions in promoting the work of the Association.
4. It shall meet quarterly receiving written monthly reports from the Director of Missions and make suggestions to him concerning the work of the Association.
5. It shall advise any group seeking to organize a mission or church.
6. It shall assist, upon request, churches with particular problems.
7. It shall maintain awareness of the mission needs of the churches in the Association and

be ready to recommend ways in which these needs may be met.

8. It shall prepare and present a budget to the Annual Meeting of the Association.
9. The committee shall also be responsible for filling the position of Office Secretary whenever a vacancy occurs.

SECTION III. The Missions Committee shall recommend to the Association for approval a job description of the Director of Missions, who will serve as ex officio member of all committees.

ARTICLE VIII - Other Committees

SECTION I. The following committees shall be composed of three or more members each. They shall be appointed by the Moderator and the Committee on Committees at the Annual Association Meeting, to serve in the ensuing year and for the next Annual Meeting.

1. Committee on Committees: To work with the Moderator in the Annual Session in appointment of committees.
2. Nominating Committee:
 - a. Nominate the Associational officers.
 - b. Name and recommend eleven members for the Missions Committee to be elected by the Association in the Annual Meeting.
 - c. Recommend to the Executive Committee replacements for vacancies occurring during the year.
 - d. All nominees and recommended persons

named by the Nominating Committee shall have been consulted as to their availability for the respective positions.

3. Committee on Reports:

- a. This Committee shall nominate representatives who will correlate and report on the following phases of work: Cooperative Program, Church libraries, Baptist Children's Homes, Baptist Hospital, Homes for the Aging, Associational Stewardship, Home-State-Foreign Missions, Baptist Periodicals, American Bible Society, Christian Education, Civic Righteousness, Historian, and the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.
- b. These representatives shall serve as leaders in the Association in correlating and promoting the work with their respective agencies.
- c. Each of the representatives named shall make a brief written report to the Annual Associational Meeting informing the people about the work they have been chosen to represent.

4. Program Committee:

- a. This Committee shall prepare a printed program for the Annual Association Meeting, which shall be sent to all persons on the program and to all pastors.
- b. This committee shall, in the opening meeting, present the printed program for adoption with necessary adjustments.

5. Committee on Places and Preachers:

- a. This Committee shall recommend the

time and place, or places for the next Annual Associational Meeting.

- b. This Committee shall recommend the preachers and alternates for the Association Sermon and Missionary Sermon.

6. Constitutional Amendment Committee:

- a. This Committee shall consider and recommend changes in this Constitution which have been referred to them by the Executive Committee or in the regular Annual Meeting.

- b. This Committee shall recommend changes in this Constitution that become necessary for clarity and for the proper functioning of the Associational work.

7. Committee on Resolutions:

- a. This Committee shall consider and present to the Annual Associational Meeting any resolutions referred to them.

- b. They shall prepare and present any further resolutions deemed expedient to them.

8. Youth Committee:

- a. This Committee shall work with, in advisory capacity, the youth of the Association.

- b. They shall promote programs that are of interest to the youth, such as music festivals, camps, retreats, study courses, fellowship and the like.

9. Ordination Committee:

- a. When so requested by a member church, they shall examine any candidate for the gospel ministry, in matters of life, doc-

trine, personal faith, cooperation, and any others relating to the ministerial call.

b. Upon approval, they shall recommend the ordination of this candidate.

10. Seminary Extension Committee:

They shall promote and direct the Seminary Extension Work. They shall appoint a Seminary Extension Director and Registrar annually. They shall appoint teachers in accordance with certification requirements of the Seminary Extension Department. They shall select centers, courses, and set the time for classes in this program.

11. Bible Camp Committee:

This Committee shall be responsible for planning, promoting, and carrying out an annual Bible Camp.

12. Properties Committee:

Responsible for overseeing all properties of the Association. The committee is responsible to the Executive Committee and must receive approval of the Executive Committee prior to undertaking any project costing more than \$200.00. Recommend properties budget to the Missions Committee for inclusion in the Associational budget.

ARTICLE IX - Annual Meetings

The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be on Thursday and Friday following the first Sunday in August.

ARTICLE X - Amendments

1. This Constitution may be amended in the following manner: Notification of the proposed amendments shall be made in writing to each church in the Association not less than thirty days, and not more than sixty days, prior to the Annual Meeting, such notification coming through the Associational Office.
2. A copy of the proposed amendments shall be provided to each messenger present for the first session.
3. A first reading of the proposed amendment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all messengers present and voting at the first session of the Annual Meeting. All changes, if any, to the proposed amendment shall be presented to the assembly at the first session prior to this first reading vote.
4. A final approval of the amendment shall be by a two-thirds vote of all messengers present and voting at the second session of the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XI - Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary authority for this Association shall be *Robert's Rules of Order* in its most recent revision available at the time of the meeting concerned, except where it may be in conflict with this Constitution.

**ARTICLE XII -
Amended Constitutional Copies**

Certified copies of this Constitution as amended shall be filed with the office of Director of Missions, Chairman of the Constitution Committee, the Associational Historian, and not less than one copy placed in a safety box in a local bank.

ARTICLE XIII - Trustees and Property

SECTION I. Title to all property, real or personal, owned and held by the Association, either outright or on special trust, with the exception of the Association's current operating funds, shall be vested in Board of Trustees, to consist of three persons (preferably a lawyer) who are members of affiliated churches. Trustees shall serve for three (3) years with one trustee rotating off each year and cannot be re-elected as a trustee until one year has elapsed. One new trustee shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected at the Annual Meeting.

SECTION II. The Trustees shall appoint their own chairman and secretary.

SECTION III. The Trustees of the Association, in addition to holding title to the Association's real and personal property, shall sign and execute all deeds, bills of sale, contracts, notes, mortgages, deeds of trust, and other papers and documents affecting the Association's property, upon authorization duly given at any regular or special meetings of the

Association. The Trustees shall make reports to the annual sessions of the Association and at other times, if required by the Executive Committee.

State of North Carolina
County of Madison

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF
FRENCH BROAD MISSIONARY
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC.**

ARTICLE 1 - NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE

SECTION I. The name of the non-profit corporation shall be "French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc.". The French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. shall hereinafter in this Constitution and the By-Laws be referred to as "Association" or "Corporation" and said terms shall be interchangeable.

SECTION II. The principal office of the Corporation shall be at the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. building known and hereinafter referred to as the Baptist Center at 22 Forrester Road, Mars Hill, Madison County, North Carolina 28754 with a post office address of the Corporation as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

Recognizing that the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. is made up of sovereign

and autonomous churches that voluntarily co-operate through the Association, the purpose of this Association shall be:

1. To promote the cause of Christ.
2. To promote and coordinate fellowship among sister churches.
3. To assist each member church in its work in ways and by means consistent with the mission of that church.
4. To promote missions and Christian Education in each church through associational programs.
5. To seek to involve churches in service and mission projects sponsored by the Association.
6. To cooperate with the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention in Kingdom advancement.
7. To engage in any lawful activity within the purposes for which this Association may be organized which are incidental to and in furtherance of the exempt purposes of the Corporation.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Member Churches

1. This association shall be composed of duly constituted Southern Baptist churches which have been formally accepted as members and which continue in fellowship by cooperating in the purpose and work of the Association by naming messengers to the

Annual Meetings and by reporting to such Annual Meetings on forms which are provided by the Association.

2. The original member churches of this Association shall consist of the present and existing member churches of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, it being the intent of said association to continue in existence but to do so in corporate form. The original member churches of this Association as incorporated are as follows:

Alexander	Little Ivy
Arrington Branch	Locust Grove
Beech Glen	Long Branch
Belva	Madison Seminary
Bethel	Mars Hill
Big Laurel	Marshall, First
Bull Creek	Middle Fork
California Creek	Mount Pleasant
Calvary	Mount Sheba
Chapel Hill	North Fork
Davis Chapel	Oak Grove
Enon	Oak Hill
Forks of Ivy	Oak Ridge
Gabriels Creek	Paint Fork
Grandview	Paint Gap
Grapevine	Peek's Chapel
Hopewell	Piney Grove
Hot Springs, First	Piney Mountain
Ivy Hill	Trinity
Laurel Bend	Union Valley
Laurel Branch	Upper Laurel
Laurel Chapel	Upper Rice Creek
Laurel Valley	Walnut
Little Creek	Walnut Creek

3. A church seeking admission to membership in the Association may make application in the following manner:

- a. After receiving a request for admission into the Association, the Membership Committee is to meet with the church to discuss its desire for membership and explain the associational requirements for admission.
- b. Formal action by the group or church seeking admission reflecting that 75% of those voting express their intent to cooperate.
- c. A written statement reflecting their beliefs and practices.
- d. A written statement expressing their intent to cooperate.
- e. A willingness to meet with the Membership Committee to discuss other items of mutual interest to both parties. The Membership Committee should be sensitive to groups seeking its services and be willing to present a statement of Baptist beliefs and practices and what it means to cooperate with the churches in the Association in a world-wide mission program.
- f. A completed application shall be submitted to the Membership Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of an Annual Meeting of the Association.

4. Following its examination of the application of a church for membership in the Association, the Membership Committee shall report its findings to the Association on the First day of the Annual Session and shall make one of the following recommendations:
 - a. That this church be accepted under watch care for one year.

- b. That action on the request be deferred, pending discussion of the Membership Committee with leaders of the church making application.
 - c. That the request for membership be denied. The recommendation of the Membership Committee shall be presented again on the Second day of the Annual Session and shall require a two-thirds majority of the members of the Association at a duly constituted Annual Meeting of the Association present and voting. The Moderator shall report the action of the Association to the church in writing.
- 5. Should a member church decide to withdraw from the Association to join another association or to remain unattached, it should proceed in the following manner.
 - a. Decision to withdraw shall have been determined in formal business session of the church.
 - b. A certified copy of the minutes of the formal business session shall be submitted to the Moderator of the Association and Chairman of the Executive Committee.
 - c. The Moderator shall appoint a committee to confer with the church as to reason and/or communicate any grievances the church has toward the Association.
 - d. The committee shall report its findings to the Association in Annual Session and upon favorable vote of two-thirds of the members of the Association at a duly

constituted Annual Meeting of the Association present and voting on the Second day, the church shall be dismissed.

6. The Association in Annual Session, by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Association at a duly constituted Annual Meeting of the Association present and voting, may withdraw fellowship from a member church upon investigation and recommendation of the Executive Committee, when such church is adjudged to have ceased promoting the objectives of the Association, or when the church has failed to send its annual letter to the Association for two consecutive years. However, before the Association formally severs its relationship with a member church, it shall make a strong effort to work out problems and retain the church in fellowship. If a church does not report to the Association in a given year, the Association shall take the initiative to assist the church in meeting reasonable requirements for continuing fellowship with Association.

SECTION II. Membership of the Annual Meetings and Special called Associational Meetings of the Association.[Rev. 8/9/91]

1. The membership of the Annual and Special called Associational Meetings of the Association shall be composed of Messengers, Pastors of member churches, elected officers, and Committee Chairperson. Said membership shall hereinafter in this Constitu-

tion and ByLaws be referred as "members of the Association" whether the individual is a messenger, Pastor, elected officer, or Committee Chairperson. [Rev. 8/9/91]

2. Each member church is entitled to three Messengers, and one additional Messenger for every twenty-five members above fifty. No church shall have more than ten messengers.
3. Messengers, Pastors, elected officers, and committee chairpersons shall constitute the official voting enrollment in any session. [Rev. 8/9/91]
4. The names of the Messengers printed on the minutes shall include only those attending and registering at the associational meetings.
5. A quorum of the members of the association for the transaction of business shall consist of at least one member representing or coming from sixteen (16) member churches, whether that individual member be a messenger, pastor, elected officer of the Association, or Committee chairperson of the Association. The terms "duly Constituted Annual, or Special Called Associational Meetings of the Association" in this Constitution and By-Laws shall refer to an Annual or a Special Called Associational Meeting of the Association where a quorum of the members of the Association are present. Unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws, the act of the majority of the members of the Association present at a

meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Association membership.
[Rev. 8/9/91]

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

SECTION I. The Officers of the Association shall be: Moderator (who shall be referred to as "President" of the Corporation in relation to the legal transaction of the Corporation), Vice-Moderator (who shall be referred to as "Vice President" of the corporation in relation to the legal transactions of the Corporation), Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Trustees, Historian, Chaplain, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Brotherhood Director, Women's Missionary Union Director, Music Director, Evangelism Director, Mission Development Director, Vacation Bible School Director, and the Chairman of the following ongoing committees:

Bible Camp, Personnel, Properties, Seminary Extension, Stewardship, Finance, and Youth." [Rev. 8/7/92]

SECTION II. Terms of office shall be as follows:

1. All elected officers shall take office at the close of the last session of the Annual Associational Meeting.
2. The duties of the Clerk serving during the current session are not ended, however, until the work of the session is completed and the minutes printed and distributed.
3. The Moderator may serve no more than two years consecutively.

4. All committee members appointed and elected in the Annual Session begin their work at the close of the Annual Meeting and continue through the next Annual Session of the Association.
5. Officers elected and committee members appointed at the Annual Session shall take office and begin their work at the close of the Annual Session without any formal installation.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION I The French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. will function as an incorporated body. The Trustees, Moderator of the Association, Vice-Moderator of the Association, and the Treasurer of the Association will serve as the Board of Directors. The Moderator of the Association shall serve as President of the Board and the Association, the Vice-Moderator as the Vice-President of the Board and the Association, the Treasurer of the Association shall serve as Treasurer of the Board and the Association. The Director of Missions shall serve as Secretary of the Board and the Association in all matters in relation to the legal transactions of the Board of Directors on behalf of the Association. Provided, however, said Director of Missions/Secretary to the Board of Directors and the Association shall not be a voting member of the Board of Directors. [Rev. 8/6/93]

SECTION II. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors fixed by this Constitution and By-Laws shall constitute a quorum for the transaction

of business. The act of the majority of the Directors present at the meeting of which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors.

SECTION III. The Board of Directors shall have all the authority and power of Board of Directors of non-profit corporations under the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act in Chapter 55A of the General Statutes of North Carolina as the same now exists and as may be amended subject to any and all limitations expressly stated in this Constitution and By-Laws.

SECTION IV. The Board of Directors shall meet each year immediately after the Annual Meeting of the members of the Association for the consideration of any business that may be properly brought before the meeting. No additional notice of any kind to either old or new members of the Board of Directors for such annual meeting shall be necessary. Other meetings of the Board of Directors may be held upon call of the Moderator / President or two of the six Board members provided notice of the same be mailed to all Directors at least three days prior to the meeting. If all Board members agree such other meetings may be held upon such call by phone communication provided all Board members execute a waiver of notice prior to the holding of such meeting. The Board of Directors may schedule regular meetings at the Board's option.

ARTICLE VI — EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION I. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers named in Article IV, Section I, Committee Chairpersons, pastors and two elected

laypersons from each church. For the purpose of this Section, the term "layperson" may include a messenger elected from a member church but it shall also mean that a church may elect laypersons, separate and apart from messengers provided in this Constitution and By-Laws, to serve on the Executive Committee. The Moderator shall serve as Chairperson.

SECTION II. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer shall be from different churches at the time of election.

SECTION III. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:

1. To act on behalf of the Association between Annual Meetings of the Association.
2. To carry out the plans laid at the Annual Session of the Association, as far as possible, and in line with the general policies and practices of the Associational work.
3. Executive Committee members should serve as connecting links between the Association and the churches. Church needs/programs should be brought to the attention of the Association; Associational needs/programs should also be reported to the churches.
4. The Executive Committee will meet on the First Saturday of November, February, and May, at 10:00 a.m. at the Baptist Center and principal office of the Association. In addition to the above quarterly meetings, the Executive Committee may hold special meetings upon call of the Moderator or by twelve

of the members of the Executive Committee provided that notice of the same be mailed to all members of the Executive Committee at least seven (7) days prior to the special meeting. Such special meetings shall be held at the Baptist Center and principal office of the Association, unless said building is not available for the special meeting.

5. A quorum of the Executive Committee for the transaction of business shall consist of at least one member representing or coming from twelve (12) of the member churches, whether that individual member be an officer named in Article IV, Section I of this Constitution and By-Laws, Committee Chairperson, Pastor, or layperson from a church. Unless otherwise provided for by this Constitution and Bylaws, the act of majority of the members of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII - ASSOCIATIONAL COUNCIL

SECTION I. The Associational Council shall be composed of the officers named in Article IV, Section I. The Vice-Moderator will serve as chairperson of this council.

SECTION II. Purpose of the Associational Council shall be: The Council is to be the main coordinating and advisory group for the Association.

SECTION III. Duties of the Council:

1. Serve as a liaison between Associational officers, organizations and committees.
2. Determine needs of churches and Association and recommend ways to meet these needs.
3. Study and propose short-range and long-range goals for the Association.
4. Prepare Annual Associational Calendar.
5. Report quarterly to the Associational Executive Committee and annually to the Association.

**ARTICLE VIII —
MISSIONS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

SECTION I. The Missions Development Committee shall be composed of a Director and eleven additional members recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Association in Annual Meeting. The Associational WMU Mission Action Director, Brotherhood Director, Sunday School Special Ministries Director, and Chaplain will serve as ex officio members of this committee. All mission work sponsored by the Association shall be under the supervision and direction of the Missions Development Committee.
[Rev. 8/7/92]

SECTION II. Areas of Ministry:

1. New Work
 - a. Survey church extension needs and determine areas for church starts
 - b. Secure sponsoring group

- c. Secure resources (human and financial)
- d. Provide training, guidance and counsel for sponsoring group

2. Special Mission Ministries
 - a. Provide ministry to persons in Nursing Homes and jails
 - b. Provide ministry to resort areas, camp-grounds, and mobile home parks
3. Christian Social Ministries
 - a. Literacy ministry
 - b. Church community ministries
 - c. Disaster ministries
 - d. Singles' ministries
 - e. Senior adult ministries
 - f. Ministry for drug and alcohol addicts
 - g. Ministry to blind and handicapped
 - h. Youth and family service ministry

ARTICLE IX - OTHER COMMITTEES

SECTION I. The following committees shall be composed of three or more members each. They shall be nominated by the Committee on Committees and approved at the Annual Associational Meeting to serve in the ensuing year and for the next Annual Meeting. Committees will be on a rotational basis with at least one person rotating off each year.

1. Committee on Committees: To nominate the persons to serve on the Standing Committees and to present those nominated to the Annual Meeting for approval.
2. Nominating Committee:

- a. Nominate the Associational officers.
- b. Name and recommend eleven members for the Missions Committee to be elected by the Association in the Annual Meeting.
- c. Recommend to the Executive Committee replacements for vacancies occurring during the year.
- d. All nominees and recommended persons named by the nominating Committee shall have been consulted as to their availability for the respective positions.

3. Committee on Reports:

- a. This Committee shall nominate representatives who correlate and report on the following phases of work: Cooperative Program, Church Libraries, Baptist Children's Homes, Baptist Hospital, Homes for the Aging, Associational Stewardship, Home State-Foreign Missions, Baptist Periodicals, American Bible Society, Christian Education, Civic Righteousness, Historian, Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Christian Action League and Baptist Foundation.
[Rev. 8/9/91]
- b. These Representatives shall serve as leaders in the Association in correlating and promoting the work with their respective agencies.
- c. Each of the representatives named shall make a brief written report to the Annual Associational Meeting informing the people about the work they have chosen to represent.

4. Program Committee:
 - a. This Committee shall prepare a printed program for the Annual Associational Meeting which shall be sent to all persons on the program and to all pastors.
 - b. This Committee shall, on the first day of the Annual Meeting, present the printed program for adoption with necessary adjustments.
5. Committee on Places and Preachers:
 - a. This Committee shall recommend the time and place or places for the next Annual Associational Meeting.
 - b. This Committee shall recommend the preachers and alternates for the Associational Sermon and Missionary Sermon.
6. Constitution and By-Laws Amendment Committee:
 - a. This Committee shall consider and recommend changes in this Constitution and By-Laws which have been referred to them by the Executive Committee or in the regular Annual Meeting.
 - b. This Committee shall recommend changes in this Constitution and By-Laws that become necessary for clarity and for the proper functioning of the Associational work.
7. Committee on Resolutions:
 - a. This Committee shall consider and present to the Annual Associational Meeting any resolutions referred to them.
 - b. They shall prepare and present any further resolutions deemed expedient to them.

8. Youth Committee:

- a. This Committee shall work with, in advisory capacity, the youth of the Association.
- b. They shall promote the programs that are of interest to youth, such as music festivals, camps, retreats, study courses, fellowship and the like.

9. Ordination Committee:

- a. When so requested by a member church, they shall examine any candidate for the gospel ministry in matters of life, doctrine, personal faith, cooperation, and any others relating to the ministerial call.
- b. Upon approval, they shall recommend the ordination of this candidate.

10. Seminary Extension Committee:

They shall promote and direct the Seminary Extension work. They shall appoint a Seminary Extension Director and Registrar annually. They shall appoint teachers in accordance with certification requirements of the Seminary Extension Department. They shall select centers, courses, and set the time for classes in this program.

11. Bible Camp Committee:

This Committee shall be responsible for planning, promoting, and carrying out an annual Bible Camp.

12. Properties Committee:

Responsible for overseeing all properties of the Association. The Committee is responsible to the Executive Committee and must receive approval of the Executive Committee prior to undertaking any project costing

more than \$200.00. Recommend Properties budget to the Stewardship/Finance Committee for inclusion in the Associational budget. [Rev. 8/9/91]

13. Stewardship/Finance Committee:

Assists the Association in securing, administering, and reporting its finances. Its duties include:

- a. Develop and recommend an overall financial development plan.
- b. Develop and recommend an Associational budget based on the plans of the Association's various programs and ministries.
- c. Conduct studies and make recommendations concerning proposed expenditures not included in the budget.
- d. Review expenditures periodically in terms of budget allocations and recommend budget adjustments, if needed.
- e. Develop and recommend financial policies and procedures as needed.
- f. Plan and coordinate stewardship programs as needed.

14. Personnel Committee:

Assist the Association in paid and volunteer staff personnel administration. Its duties include:

- a. Serve as Director of Missions Search Committee when a vacancy occurs.
 1. Provide a biographical sketch of recommended electee to all churches prior to his recommendation to the Executive Committee or association.

2. Recommend nominee to Annual Meeting of Association or Special Called Associational Meeting for consideration. [Rev. 8/9/91]
 - b. Recommend policies and procedures for all employed personnel.
 - c. Prepare and maintain current job descriptions for all employed personnel.
 - d. Recruit, interview, and recommend other persons in cooperation with appropriate supervisor as vacancies occur.
 - e. Develop and recommend salaries and benefits for employed personnel.
 - f. Serve as a support group to the Director of Missions and other staff.
 - g. Recommend for consideration to the Executive Committee and the membership of the Association at an Annual meeting of the Association, when deemed advisable, job descriptions and/or duties and responsibilities of all offices of the corporation that are not specified in this Constitution and ByLaws. The Chairperson of this committee shall serve as ex officio member of the Stewardship Finance Committee. [Rev. 8/7/92]
15. **Membership Committee:**
Assists the Association in determining when churches are of like faith and order and can be properly accepted in the Associational fellowship. Duties include:
 - a. Recommend and implement approved guidelines for receiving churches into the Association.

- b. Counsel with Churches considering seeking admission to the fellowship of the Association.
- c. Examine the credentials of churches seeking admission into the fellowship of the Association (namely, their articles of faith or doctrinal positions, church covenant, policy - including constitution and by-laws and relationship to the denomination).
- d. Serves as a “church-conflict”-advisory body.

16. Church Media/Library Committee:

Assist the churches in the establishment, development and improvement of church media/library services.

17. Evangelism Committee:

Assists churches in reaching people for Christ through Evangelistic Training and by bringing the churches together in corporate efforts of evangelism.

**ARTICLE X - COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON
AND MEETINGS OTHER THAN THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

SECTION I. At the Annual Meeting when the committees are recommended and elected, the Chairperson of each committee shall be designated and elected/appointed as such except the Vice-Moderator shall serve as Chairperson of the Associational Council. A majority of the number of committee members for each committee so elected at the Annual Meeting of the Association shall

constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of the majority of each committee present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

SECTION II. Each committee shall hold such regular, quarterly or special meetings as they may determine to hold from time to time. Notice of the same shall be given by mail or phone communication within a reasonable time prior to each committee meeting.

ARTICLE XI - DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

The Director of Missions will be responsible to the Executive Committee and he shall make a written report to this committee each quarter. He shall also make a written report to the Association at the Annual Meeting.

The Director of Missions shall be recommended by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Association at the Annual Meeting or a Special Called Associational Meeting. His election shall be by a two-thirds majority of a duly constituted annual or special called meeting of the Association present and voting.

His time of office shall continue from the date of employment designated at the time of election until terminated by mutual consent or request of the Executive Committee or membership of the Association at any Annual Meeting or a Special Called Associational Meeting. He shall be an ex officio member and a non-voting member of all committees and organizations of the association in a serving and advisory capacity. He will supervise the work for all paid staff/employees. [Rev. 8/9/91]

**ARTICLE XII - ANNUAL AND SPECIAL
CALLED ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**
[Rev. 8/9/91]

SECTION I. The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday following the first Sunday in August. The places of the Annual Meetings for the next year shall be designated by vote of the membership of the Association as recommended by the Committee on Places and Preachers. [Rev.8/9/91]

SECTION II. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Executive Committee, Associational Council, Chairperson of the Personnel Committee or Moderator, provided two weeks written notice is given to member churches, Pastors of member churches, elected officers and committee chairpersons of the time and place and purposes of the special meetings. Membership and voting privileges and requirements will be the same as described in Article III, SECTION II. [Rev. 8/9/91]

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

1. This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended in the following manner: Notification of the proposed amendments shall be made in writing to each church in the Association not less than thirty (30) days, and not more than sixty (60) days, prior to the Annual Meeting; such notification coming through the Associational Office.
2. A copy of the proposed amendments shall be provided to each messenger, elected officer

of the Association, Pastor of the church members, and Committee Chairperson present for the first session.

3. A first reading of the proposed amendment will be presented at the first session of the Annual Meeting. The approval of the amendment shall be by two-thirds majority of the members of the Association present and voting at the second session of the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XIV - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The parliamentary authority for this Association shall be Robert's Rules of Order in its most recent revision available at the time of the meeting concerned, except when it may be in conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws and in such conflict, this Constitution and By-Laws shall control.

ARTICLE XV - AMENDED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COPIES

Certified copies of this Constitution and Bylaws as amended shall be filed with the office of Director of Missions, Chairperson of the Constitution and By Laws Committee, the Associational Historian, and not less than one copy placed in a safety deposit box in a local bank.

ARTICLE XVI - TRUSTEES

SECTION I. The Board of Trustees shall consist of three persons (preferable one being a lawyer) who are members of member churches. Trustees

shall serve for three (3) years, with one trustee rotating off each year and not be re-elected as a trustee until one year has elapsed. One new trustee shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected at the Annual Meeting. The Trustees shall be members of the Board of Directors of the Association.

SECTION II. The Trustees shall appoint their own Chairperson and Secretary when acting solely in their roles as Trustees as to the best interest of the Association.

SECTION III. The Trustees of the Association shall have such duties as may be assigned to them from time to time by the Executive Committee and the membership of the Association at an Annual Meeting of the Association. The Trustees shall make reports to the Annual Sessions of the Association and at other times, if required by the Executive Committee.

SECTION IV. The present Trustees of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association shall serve as Trustees of this corporate Association until their successors are elected as herein provided in this Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE XVII - ASSETS OF THE CORPORATION

Title to all property, real or personal, owned and held by the Association, either outright or on special trust, shall be vested in the corporate name of the Association, to wit: French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. All deeds, bills of sale, contracts, notes, mortgages, deeds of trust, and

other papers and documents affecting the Association's property, shall be executed by the President and Secretary to the Board of Directors as provided in Article V of this Constitution and By-Laws, upon authorization duly given at any Annual or special Meeting of membership of the Association. In the absence of the Moderator/President, the Vice-Moderator shall act as Vice President and execute such documents on behalf of the corporation.

**CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION
OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

This is to certify that the foregoing Constitution and By-Laws of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc., was read and adopted upon motion duly made and seconded by the Board of Directors on August 10, 1990.

This is to further certify that the foregoing Constitution and ByLaws of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc., was read and adopted upon motion duly made and seconded by the membership of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. at the 1990 Annual Meeting of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. held on August 10, at Middle Fork Baptist Church.

This, the 10th day of August, 1990.

**FRENCH BROAD MISSIONARY
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC.**

By: Dean Grindstaff, President

ATTEST:

Joe R. Edwards, Secretary

This is to further certify that Amendments to the Constitution and ByLaws of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc., were read and adopted upon motion duly made and sec-
onded by the membership of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. at the 1991 Annual Meeting of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. held on August 9, 1991, at Beech Glen Baptist Church; said Amendments

being included in the foregoing Constitution and Bylaws and being followed by [Rev.8/9/91].

This, the 12th day of August, 1991.

FRENCH BROAD MISSIONARY
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC.
By: Paul Silver, President

ATTEST:

Troy Rogers, Secretary

This is to further certify that Amendments to the Constitution and ByLaws of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc., were read and adopted upon motion duly made and seconded by the membership of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. at the 1992 Annual Meeting of the French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc. held on August 7, 1992, at Forks of Ivy Baptist Church; said Amendments being included in the foregoing by Constitution and Bylaws and being followed by [Rev.8/7/92].

This, the 17th day of August, 1992.

FRENCH BROAD MISSIONARY
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC.
By: Walter Ponder, President

ATTEST:

Troy Rogers, Secretary

Bibliography

Ammons, John, *Outlines of History of French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, no date.

Paschal, George W., *History of North Carolina Baptists*, (2 vols). Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1930, 1955.

Roberts, Chris S., "David Roberts—The Man", unpublished manuscript.

Underwood, Mary Evelyn, *Faith of Our Fathers—Living Still*. Asheville: Biltmore Press, 1984.

Young, James Oliver, *A Baptist Looks Back*. Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1968.

French Broad Association, *Minutes* (most of these have been lost for the early years, 1807-1840, but the collection is almost complete after that date). In the Appalachian Room, Mars Hill Col-

lege Library; also the Baptist Archives at Wake Forest University.

Correspondence from the Rev. R. Dale Fisher, the Rev. Joe Ronald Edwards, and the Rev. Troy Rogers.

Interviews with the Rev. E. J. Jenkins, Wade Huey, Mrs. Wilford Roberts Taylor, and other members of the History Committee.

Histories of member churches. Written by clerks or members of the local congregations.

Appendix

List of churches and the date they became a member of the French Broad Association.

Place and Date of the Meetings of the French Broad Association, etc.

Constitution of the Reunited Association, 1850.

Constitution of 1920.

Constitution of 1947.

Constitution of 1956.

Constitution of 1987.

Constitution of French Broad Missionary Baptist Association, Inc., 1992.

A rectangular stamp with a barcode at the top. The text '128' is on the left, 'BR' is in the center, and 'CONSERVATION' is on the right. Below the stamp is the date '05/20/97' and the number '48670'. The word 'SELE' is printed below the number. The stamp is from the 'CONSERVATION' department of the Israel National Library.



